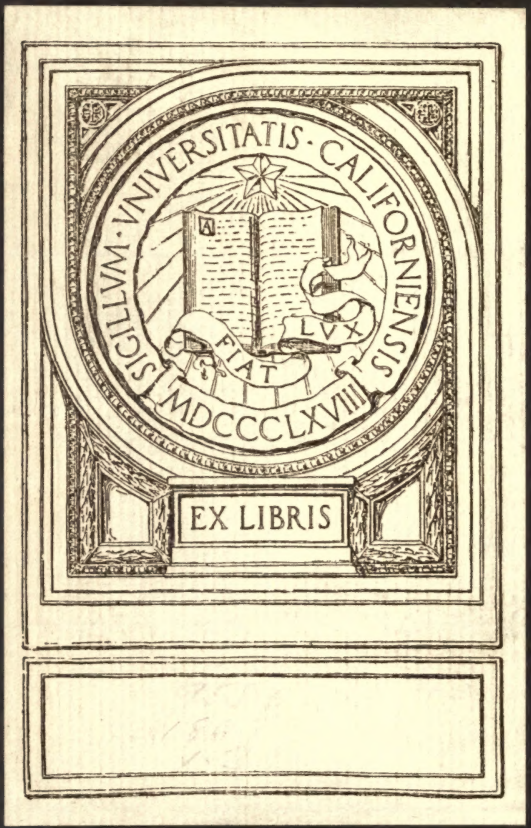

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POE'S WORKS

Standard Edition

VOL. III

POEMS AND ESSAYS

The Works

OF

Edgar Allan Poe

EDITED

BY

JOHN H. INGRAM

VOL. III

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE POEMS.

These trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random "the rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not—they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.



THE RAVEN.

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

Caught from some unhappy master, whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope the melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent. or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting—still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a Demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

THE BELLS.

I.

HEAR the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten golden-notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells

On the future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III.

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror now their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavour
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—

Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells—
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells,
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.



ULALUME.

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crispéd and sere—
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
(Though once we had journeyed down here)
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn—
As the star-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs—
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies—
To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings till they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

Its Sibyllic splendour is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright—
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispéd and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere;
And I cried—"It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—
That I brought a dread burden down here!
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
This misty mid region of Weir—
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

LENORE.

Ah, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown for ever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river.
And, Guy de Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—
A dirge for her, the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,
And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that she died!
How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung
By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue
That did to death the innocence that died, and died so young?"

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *débonnaire*, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old days!
Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnéd Earth.
To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—
From grief and groan to a golden throne beside the King of Heaven."

THE COLOSSEUM.

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie),
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!

Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornèd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened
shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these grey stones—are they all—
All of the famed, and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise for ever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

TO HELEN.

I SAW thee once—once only—years ago:
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,
With quietude, and sultriness and slumber,
Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half-reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
Was it not Fate (whose name is also Sorrow),
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me—(O Heaven!—O God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)—
Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly lustre of the moon went out:

The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odours
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes—
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.
I saw but them—they were the world to me.
I saw but them—saw only them for hours—
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!
How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!
How silently serene a sea of pride!
How daring an ambition! yet how deep—
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees
Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*
They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
They have not left me (as my hopes have) since.
They follow me—they lead me through the years.
They are my ministers—yet I their slave.
Their office is to illumine and enkindle—
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire.
They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea:
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—

And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the side of the sea.

THE HAUNTED PALACE.

IN the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago);
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous window, saw

Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out for ever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

THE CONQUEROR WORM.

Lo! 'tis a gala night
 Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
 In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
 A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
 The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
 Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
 Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
 That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
 Invisible Woe!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
 It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
 By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
 To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
 And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
 A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
 The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
 The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
 In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And over each quivering form
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy "Man,"
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

TO F——s S. O——d.

Thou wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not!
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love—a simple duty.

HYMN.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and woe—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

A VALENTINE.

For her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,
Brightly expressive as the twins of Leda,
Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies
Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure
Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn *at heart*. Search well the measure—
The words—the syllables! Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labour!
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.
Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying
Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—
Still form a synonym for Truth—Cease trying!
You will not read the riddle, though you do the best you
can do.

[To discover the names in this and the following poem, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth of the fourth, and so on to the end.]

AN ENIGMA.

"Seldom we find," says Solomon Don Dunce
"Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how *can* a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanities are arrant
Bubbles—ephemeral and *so* transparent—
But *this* is, now—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within't.

[See previous page.]

TO ——— ———

Not long ago, the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained "the power of words"—denied that ever
A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign, soft, dissyllables—
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of thought,
Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures"),

Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—
Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling.
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid empurpled vapours, far away
To where the prospect terminates—*thee only*.

TO MY MOTHER.

Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

[The above was addressed to the poet's mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm.]

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies,
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more—"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
"Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!"

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances!
By what eternal streams!

SILENCE.

THERE are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot)!
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone?*
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

DREAMLAND.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of Space—out of Time.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters—lone and dead,
Their still waters—still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

TO ZANTE.

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss!
How many thoughts of what entombéd hopes!
How many visions of a maiden that is
No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!
No more! alas, that magical sad sound
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please *no more*—
Thy memory *no more!* Accurséd ground
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
"Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

EULALIE.

I DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapour can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarté within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

ELDORADO.

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

FOR ANNIE.

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
Now in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst,
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalised spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odour
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odour,
Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie

TO ——.

I HEED not that my earthly lot
 Hath little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
 In the hatred of a minute:—
I mourn not that the desolate
 Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate
 Who am a passer by.

TO F———.

BELOVED! amid the earnest woes
 That crowd around my earthly path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
 My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
 Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free
 With storms—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
 Just o'er that one bright island smile.



SCENES FROM "POLITIAN;"

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

I.

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. ALESSANDRA and CASTIGLIONE.

Alessandra. Thou art sad, Castiglione.
Castiglione. Sad! not I.
Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!
Aless. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing
Thy happiness!—what ails thee, cousin of mine?
Why didst thou sigh so deeply?
Cas. Did I sigh?
I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,
A silly—a most silly fashion I have
When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh? (*sighing.*)
Aless. Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast indulged
Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.
Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered—
Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away
The constitution as late hours and wine.
Cas. (*musing.*) Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not even deep sorrow—
Wears it away like evil hours and wine
I will amend.

Aless. Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low born
Ill suit the like of old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.

Cas. I will drop them.

Aless. Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also more
To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain
For thy lofty rank and fashion—much depends
Upon appearances.

Cas. I'll see to it.

Aless. Then see to it!—pay more attention, sir,
To a becoming carriage—much thou wantest
In dignity.

Cas. Much, much, oh, much I want
In proper dignity.

Aless. (*haughtily*). Thou mockest me, sir!

Cas. (*abstractedly*). Sweet, gentle Lalage!

Aless. Heard I aright?
I speak to him—he speaks of Lalage!
Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*) what art thou
dreaming? He's not well!
What ails thee, sir?

Cas. (*starting*). Cousin! fair cousin!—madam!
I crave thy pardon—indeed I am not well—
Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.
This air is most oppressive!—Madam—the Duke!

Enter Di Broglio.

Di Broglio. My son, I've news for thee!—hey?—what's
the matter? (*observing Alessandra*).
I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,
You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!
I've news for you both. Politian is expected
Hourly in Rome—Politian, Earl of Leicester!
We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit
To the imperial city.

Aless. What! Politian
Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

Di Brog. The same, my love.
We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young

In years, but grey in fame. I have not seen him,
But Rumour speaks of him as of a prodigy
Pre-eminent in arts, and arms, and wealth,
And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.
Aless. I have heard much of this Politian.
Gay, volatile and giddy—is he not,
And little given to thinking?
Di Brog. Far from it, love.
No branch, they say, of all philosophy
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.
Learned as few are learned.
Aless. 'Tis very strange!
I have known men have seen Politian
And sought his company. They speak of him
As of one who entered madly into life,
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.
Cas. Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian
And know him well—nor learned nor mirthful he.
He is a dreamer, and a man shut out
From common passions.
Di Brog. Children, we disagree.
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear
Politian was a *melancholy* man? (*Exeunt.*)

II.

ROME. A Lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. LALAGE, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand-mirror. In the background JACINTA (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

Lal. Jacinta! is it thou?
Jac. (*pertly*). Yes, Ma'am, I'm here.
Lal. I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.
Sit down!—let not my presence trouble you—
Sit down!—for I am humble, most humble.

Jac. (*aside*). 'Tis time.

(*Jacinta seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read.*)

Lal. "It in another climate, so he said,
"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"
(*pauses—turns over some leaves, and resumes.*)
"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower—
"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind
"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."
Oh, beautiful!—most beautiful!—how like
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!
O happy land! (*pauses.*) She died!—the maiden died!
O still more happy maiden who couldst die!
Jacinta!

(*Jacinta returns no answer and Lalage presently resumes.*)

Again!—a similar tale
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play—
"She died full young"—one Bossola answers him—
"I think not so—her infelicity
"Seemed to have years too many"—Ah luckless lady!
Jacinta! (*still no answer*).
Here's a far sterner story—
But like—oh, very like in its despair—
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily
A thousand hearts—losing at length her own.
She died. Thus endeth the history—and her maids
Lean over her and weep—two gentle maids
With gentle names—Eiros and Charmion!
Rainbow and Dove!—Jacinta!

Jac. (*pettishly*). Madam, what *is* it?

Lal. Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind
As go down in the library and bring me
The Holy Evangelists.

Jac. Pshaw! (*exit.*)

Lal. If there be balm
For the wounded spirit in Gilead, it is there!

Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble
Will there be found—"dew sweeter far than that
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."
(*re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on the table.*)
There, Ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very troublesome
(*aside.*)
Lal. (*astonished*). What didst thou say, Jacinta? Have
I done aught
To grieve thee or to vex thee?—I am sorry.
For thou hast served me long and ever been
Trustworthy and respectful. (*resumes her reading.*)
Jac. I can't believe
She has any more jewels—no—no—she gave me all. (*aside.*)
Lal. What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.
How fares good Ugo?—and when is it to be?
Can I do aught?—is there no further aid
Thou needest, Jacinta?
Jac. Is there no *further* aid!
That's meant for me. (*aside.*) I'm sure, Madam, you need not
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.
Lal. Jewels! Jacinta,—now indeed, Jacinta,
I thought not of the jewels.
Jac. Oh! perhaps not!
But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot
Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it. (*Exit.*)
(*Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table—after a short pause raises it.*)
Lal. Poor Lalage!—and is it come to this?
Thy servant maid!—but courage!—'tis but a viper
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul!
(*taking up the mirror.*)
Ha! here at least's a friend—too much a friend
In earlier days—a friend will not deceive thee.
Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)

A tale—a pretty tale—and heed thou not
Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.
It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks,
And Beauty long deceased—remembers me
Of Joy departed—Hope, the Seraph Hope,
Inurnéd and entombed!—now, in a tone
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning
For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true!—thou liest not!
Thou hast no end to gain—no heart to break—
Castiglione lied who said he loved——
Thou true—he false!—false!—false!

(*While she speaks, a monk enters her apartment and approaches unobserved.*)

Monk. Refuge thou hast,
Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal things!
Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

Lal. (*arising hurriedly*). I *cannot* pray!—My soul is at war with God!
The frightful sounds of merriment below
Disturb my senses—go! I cannot pray—
The sweet airs from the garden worry me!
Thy presence grieves me—go!—thy priestly raiment
Fills me with dread—thy ebony crucifix
With horror and awe!

Monk. Think of thy precious soul!

Lal. Think of my early days!—think of my father
And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet home,
And the rivulet that ran before the door!
Think of my little sisters!—think of them!
And think of me!—think of my trusting love
And confidence—his vows—my ruin—think—think
Of my unspeakable misery!——begone!
Yet stay! yet stay!—what was it thou saidst of prayer
And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith
And vows before the throne?

Monk. I did.

Lal. 'Tis well.
There *is* a vow 'twere fitting should be made—

A sacred vow, imperative, and urgent,
A solemn vow!
Monk. Daughter, this zeal is well!
Lal. Father, this zeal is anything but well!
Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?
A crucifix whereon to register
This sacred vow? (*he hands her his own.*)
Not that—Oh! no!—no!—no! (*shuddering.*)
Not that! Not that!—I tell thee, holy man.
Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!
Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,—
I have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting
The deed—the vow—the symbol of the deed—
And the deed's register should tally, father!
(*draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it on high.*)
Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine
Is written in Heaven!
Monk. Thy words are madness, daughter,
And speak a purpose unholy—thy lips are livid—
Thine eyes are wild—tempt not the wrath divine!
Pause ere too late!—oh, be not—be not rash!
Swear not the oath—oh, swear it not!
Lal. 'Tis sworn!

III.

An apartment in a palace. POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR.

Baldazzar. Arouse thee now, Politian!
Thou must not—nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not
Give way unto these humours. Be thyself!
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,
And live, for now thou diest!
Politian. Not so, Baldazzar!
Surely I live.
Bal. Politian, it doth grieve me
To see thee thus.

Pol. Baldazzar, it doth grieve me
To give thee cause for grief, my honoured friend.
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?
At thy behest I will shake off that nature
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,
And be no more Politian, but some other.
Command me, sir!

Bal. To the field then—to the field—
To the senate or the field.

Pol. Alas! alas!
There is an imp would follow me even there!
There is an imp *hath* followed me even there!
There is——what voice was that?

Bal. I heard it not.
I heard not any voice except thine own,
And the echo of thine own.

Pol. Then I but dreamed.

Bal. Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp—the court
Befit thee—Fame awaits thee—Glory calls—
And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear
In hearkening to imaginary sounds
And phantom voices.

Pol. It *is* a phantom voice!
Didst thou not hear it *then?*

Bal. I heard it not.

Pol. Thou heardst it not!——Baldazzar, speak no more
To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities
Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!
We have been boys together—school-fellows—
And now are friends—yet shall not be so long—
For in the eternal city thou shalt do me
A kind and gentle office, and a Power—
A Power august, benignant, and supreme—
Shall then absolve thee of all further duties
Unto thy friend.

Bal. Thou speakest a fearful riddle

I *will* not understand.

Pol. Yet now as Fate
Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,
The sands of Time are changed to golden grains
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!
I *cannot* die, having within my heart
So keen a relish for the beautiful
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air
Is balmier now than it was wont to be—
Rich melodies are floating in the winds—
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth—
And with a holier lustre the quiet moon
Sitteth in Heaven.—Hist! hist! thou canst not say
Thou hearest not *now*, Baldazzar?

Bal. Indeed I hear not.

Pol. Not hear it!—listen now—listen!—the faintest sound
And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!
A lady's voice!—and sorrow in the tone!
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!
Again!—again!—how solemnly it falls
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice
Surely I never heard—yet it were well
Had I *but* heard it with its thrilling tones
In earlier days!

Bal. I myself hear it now.
Be still!—the voice, if I mistake not greatly,
Proceeds from yonder lattice—which you may see
Very plainly through the window—it belongs,
Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.
The singer is undoubtedly beneath
The roof of his Excellency—and perhaps
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke
As the betrothed of Castiglione,
His son and heir.

Pol. Be still!—it comes again!

Voice (*very faintly*). "And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus,
Who have loved thee so long

In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay—say nay!"

Bal. The song is English, and I oft have heard it
In merry England—never so plaintively—
Hist! hist! it comes again!

Voice (*more loudly*). "Is it so strong
As for to leave me thus
Who have loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay—say nay!"

Bal. 'Tis hushed and all is still!

Pol. All *is not* still.

Bal. Let us go down.

Pol. Go down, Baldazzar, go!

Bal. The hour is growing late—the Duke awaits us,—
Thy presence is expected in the hall
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

Voice (*distinctly*). "Who have loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among,
And is thy heart so strong?
Say nay—say nay!"

Bal. Let us descend!—'tis time. Politian, give
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,
Your bearing lately savoured much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

Pol. Remember? I do. Lead on! I *do* remember
(*going.*)
Let us descend. Believe me I would give,
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice—
"To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear
Once more that silent tongue."

Bal. Let me beg you, sir,
Descend with me—the Duke may be offended
Let us go down, I pray you.

Voice (*loudly*). *Say nay!—say nay!*
Pol. (*aside*). 'Tis strange!—'tis very strange—methought
the voice
Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay!
(*Approaching the window.*)
Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.
Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,
Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make
Apology unto the Duke for me;
I go not down to-night.
Bal. Your lordship's pleasure
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian
Pol. Good-night, my friend, good-night.

IV.

The gardens of a palace—Moonlight. LALAGE and POLITIAN.

Lalage. And dost thou speak of love
To *me*, Politian?—dost thou speak of love
To Lalage?—ah woe—ah woe is me!
This mockery is most cruel—most cruel indeed!
Politian. Weep not! oh, sob not thus!—thy bitter tears
Will madden me. Oh mourn not, Lalage—
Be comforted! I know—I know it all,
And *still* I speak of love. Look at me, brightest,
And beautiful Lalage!—turn here thine eyes!
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.
Thou askest me that—and thus I answer thee—
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. (*kneeling.*)
Sweet Lalage, *I love thee—love thee—love thee;*
Thro' good and ill—thro' weal and woe *I love thee.*
Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now
Within my spirit for *thee.* And do I love? (*arising.*)

Even for thy woes I love thee—even for thy woes—
Thy beauty and thy woes.
Lal. Alas, proud Earl,
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!
How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens
Pure and reproachless of thy princely line,
Could the dishonoured Lalage abide?
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory—
My seared and blighted name, how would it tally
With the ancestral honours of thy house,
And with thy glory?
Pol. Speak not to me of glory!
I hate—I loathe the name; I do abhor
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.
Art thou not Lalage, and I Politian?
Do I not love—art thou not beautiful—
What need we more? Ha! glory!—now speak not of it:
By all I hold most sacred and most solemn—
By all my wishes now—my fears hereafter—
By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven—
There is no deed I would more glory in,
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory
And trample it under foot. What matters it—
What matters it, my fairest, and my best,
That we go down unhonoured and forgotten
Into the dust—so we descend together.
Descend together—and then—and then perchance—
Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?
Pol. And then perchance
Arise together, Lalage, and roam
The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,
And still—
Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?
Pol. And still *together—together.*
Lal. Now, Earl of Leicester!
Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts
I feel thou lovest me truly.
Pol. Oh, Lalage! (*throwing himself upon his knee.*)
And lovest thou *me?*

Lal. Hist! hush! within the gloom
Of yonder trees methought a figure passed—
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless—
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.
(*walks across and returns.*)
I was mistaken—'twas but a giant bough
Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

Pol. My Lalage—my love! why art thou moved?
Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind
Is chilly—and these melancholy boughs
Throw over all things a gloom.

Lal. Politian!
Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land
With which all tongues are busy—a land new found—
Miraculously found by one of Genoa—
A thousand leagues within the golden west?
A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,
And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests,
And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds
Of Heaven untrammelled flow—which air to breathe
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter
In days that are to come?

Pol. O, wilt thou—wilt thou
Fly to that Paradise—my Lalage, wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.
And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes—and thou shalt be
No more a mourner—but the radiant Joys
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee
And worship thee. and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,
My all;—oh, wilt thou—wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?

Lal. A deed is to be done—
Castiglione lives!

Pol. And he shall die! (*Exit.*)

Lal. (*after a pause*). And—he—shall—die!——alas!
Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?
Where am I?—what was it he said?—Politian!
Thou *art* not gone—thou art not *gone*, Politian!
I *feel* thou art not gone—yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not—thou *couldst* not go
With those words upon thy lips—O, speak to me!
And let me hear thy voice—one word—one word,
To say thou art not gone,—one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn—how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou *art* not gone—
O, speak to me! I *knew* thou wouldst not go!
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, *durst* not go.
Villain, thou *art* not gone—thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee—thus!——He is gone, he is gone—
Gone—gone. Where am I?——'tis well—'tis very well!
So that the blade be keen—the blow be sure,
'Tis well, 'tis *very* well—alas! alas!

V.

The suburbs. POLITIAN alone.

Politian. This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,
And much I fear me ill—it will not do
To die ere I have lived!—Stay—stay thy hand,
O Azrael, yet awhile!—Prince of the Powers
Of Darkness and the Tomb, O, pity me!
O, pity me! let me not perish now,
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!
Give me to live yet—yet a little while:
'Tis I who pray for life—I who so late
Demanded but to die!—what sayeth the Count?

Enter Baldazzar.

Baldazzar. That, knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud
Between the Earl Politian and himself,
He doth decline your cartel.

Pol. *What* didst thou say?
What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?
With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes
Laden from yonder bowers!—a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks
No mortal eyes have seen!—*what* said the Count?
Bal. That he, Castiglione, not being aware
Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself,
Cannot accept the challenge.
Pol. It is most true—
All this is very true. When saw you, sir,
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid
Ungenial Britain which we left so lately,
A heaven so calm as this—so utterly free
From the evil taint of clouds?—and he did *say?*
Bal. No more, my lord, than I have told you,
The Count Castiglione will not fight,
Having no cause for quarrel.
Pol. Now this is true—
All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,
And I have not forgotten it—thou'lt do me
A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,
Hold him a villain?—thus much, I prythee, say
Unto the Count—it is exceeding just
He should have cause for quarrel.
Bal. My lord!—my friend!———
Pol. (*aside*). 'Tis he—he comes himself! (*aloud*). Thou reasonest well.
I know what thou wouldst say—not send the message—
Well!—I will think of it—I will not send it.
Now prythee, leave me—hither doth come a person
With whom affairs of a most private nature
I would adjust.
Bal. I go—to morrow we meet,
Do we not?—at the Vatican.
Pol. At the Vatican. (*Exit Bal.*)

Enter Castiglione.

Cas. The Earl of Leicester here!

Pol. I *am* the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,
Dost thou not, that I am here?

Cas. My Lord, some strange,
Some singular mistake—misunderstanding—
Hath without doubt arisen: thou hast been urged
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,
To me, Castiglione; the bearer being
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing,
Having given thee no offence. Ha!—am I right?
'Twas a mistake?—undoubtedly—we all
Do err at times.

Pol. Draw, villain, and prate no more!

Cas. Ha!—draw?—and villain? have at thee then at once,
Proud Earl! (*Draws.*)

Pol. (*drawing*). Thus to the expiatory tomb,
Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee
In the name of Lalage!

Cas. (*letting fall his sword and recoiling to the extremity of the stage.*)
Of Lalage!
Hold off—thy sacred hand!—avaunt I say!
Avaunt—I will not fight thee—indeed I dare not.

Pol. Thou wilt not fight with me didst say, Sir Count?
Shall I be baffled thus?—now this is well;
Didst say thou *darest* not? Ha!

Cas. I dare not—dare not—
Hold off thy hand—with that beloved name
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee—
I cannot—dare not.

Pol. Now by my halidom
I do believe thee!—coward, I do believe thee!

Cas. Ha!—coward!—this may not be!
(*clutches his sword and staggers towards Politian, but*

his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.)

Alas! my lord,
It is—it is—most true. In such a cause
I am the veriest coward. O pity me!

Pol. (*greatly softened*). Alas!—I do—indeed I pity thee.

Cas. And Lalage——

Pol. Scoundrel!—arise and die!

Cas. It needeth not be—thus—thus—O let me die
Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting
That in this deep humiliation I perish.
For in the fight I will not raise a hand
Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home—
(*baring his bosom*).
Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon—
Strike home. I *will not* fight thee.

Pol. Now 's Death and Hell!
Am I not—am I not sorely—grievously tempted
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir:
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare
For public insult in the streets—before
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee—
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee
Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest—
Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain,—I'll taunt thee,
Dost hear? with *cowardice*—thou *wilt not* fight me?
Thou liest! thou *shalt!* (*Exit.*)

Cas. Now this indeed is just!
Most righteous, and most just, avenging Heaven!

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.*

SONNET—TO SCIENCE.

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

* Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems†—have induced me, after some hesitation, to re-publish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed *verbatim*—without alteration from the original edition—the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged. E. A. P.

† This refers to the accusation brought against Poe that he was a copyist of Tennyson.—*Ed.*

TO HELEN.

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
To the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window niche,
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

THE CITY IN THE SEA.

LO! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad, and the worst and the best,
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the Holy Heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathéd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seemed pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given

A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The Hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

Once it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sun-light lazily lay.
Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless—
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Unceasingly, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye—
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave:—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep:—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

THE SLEEPER.

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapour, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringéd lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?

Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all-solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
For ever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

ISRAFEL.*

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
"Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy Stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured Moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven),
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown-up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

* And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran.*

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

BRIDAL BALLAD.

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed *his* who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to re-assure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the churchyard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And thus the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That *proves* me happy now!

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

AL AARAAF.*

PART I.

O! NOTHING earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,
As in those gardens where the day
Springs from the gems of Circassy—
O! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill—
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy's voice so peacefully departed,
That, like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—
Oh, nothing of the dross of ours—
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—
Adorn yon world afar, afar—
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away—away—'mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendour o'er th' unchained soul—
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destined eminence—
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favoured one of God—
But, now, the ruler of an anchored realm,
She throws aside the sceptre—leaves the helm,
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

* A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,
Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth.
(Falling in wreaths thro' many a startled star,
Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar,
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt)
She looked into Infinity—and knelt.
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—
Fit emblems of the model of her world—
Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight
Of other beauty glittering thro' the light—
A wreath that twined each starry form around,
And all the opalled air in colour bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed
Of flowers; of lilies such as reared the head
On the fair Capo Deucato,* and sprang
So eagerly around about to hang
Upon the flying footsteps of—deep pride—
Of her who loved a mortal—and so died.†
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,
Upreared its purple stem around her knees:
And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnamed‡
Inmate of highest stars, where erst it shamed
All other loveliness: its honied dew
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)
Deliriously sweet, was dropp'd from Heaven,
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven
In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower
So like its own above, that, to this hour,
It still remaineth, torturing the bee
With madness, and unwonted reverie:
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf
And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief
Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head,
Repenting follies that full long have fled,

* On Santa Maura—olim *Deucadia*. † Sappho.

‡ This flower is much noticed by Leuwenhoeck and Tournefort. The bee, feeding upon its blossom, becomes intoxicated.

Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,
Like guilty beauty, chastened, and more fair:
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night:
And Clytia pondering between many a sun,*
While pettish tears adown her petals run:
And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth†—
And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,
Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing
Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king:
And Valisnerian lotus thither flown‡
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone:
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante!§
Isola d'oro!—Fior di Levante!
And the Nelumbo bud that floats for ever‖
With Indian Cupid down the holy river—
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given
To bear the goddess' song, in odours, up to Heaven:¶

* Clytia—*The Chrysanthemum Peruvianum*, or, to employ a better-known term, the *turnsol*—which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.—*B. de St. Pierre.*

† There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris a species of serpentine aloes without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odour of the vanilla during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July; you then perceive it gradually open its petals, expand them, fade, and die.—*St. Pierre.*

‡ There is found in the Rhone a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet—thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.

§ The Hyacinth.

‖ It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges, and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

¶ And golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints —*Rev. of St. John.*

"Spirit! that dwellest where,
In the deep sky,
The terrible and fair,
In beauty vie!
Beyond the line of blue—
The boundary of the star
Which turneth at the view
Of thy barrier and thy bar—
Of the barrier overgone
By the comets who were cast
From their pride, and from their throne,
To be drudges till the last—
To be carriers of fire
(The red fire of their heart)
With speed that may not tire,
And with pain that shall not 'part—
Who livest—*that* we know—
In Eternity—we feel—
But the shadow of whose brow
What spirit shall reveal?
Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,
Thy messenger, hath known
Have dream'd for thy Infinity
A model of their own*—

* The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.—*Vide Clarke's Sermons*, vol. i. page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the church.—*Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.*

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropomorphites.—*Vide Du Pin.*

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:—

Dicite sacrorum præsides nemorum Deæ, etc.
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?

Thy will is done, Oh, God!
The star hath ridden high
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode
Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee—
In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire, and so be
A partner of thy throne—
By wingéd Fantasy,*
My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
In the environs of Heaven."

She ceased—and buried then her burning cheek
Abashed, amid the lilies there, to seek
A shelter from the fervour of His eye;
For the stars trembled at the Deity.
She stirred not—breathed not—for a voice was there
How solemnly pervading the calm air!
A sound of silence on the startled ear
Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere."
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
"Silence"—which is the merest word of all.
All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things
Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings—
But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high
The eternal voice of God is passing by,
And the red winds are withering in the sky!

"What tho' in worlds which sightless cycles run,†
Link'd to a little system, and one sun—

Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.

And afterwards,

Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, etc.

* Seltsamen Tochter Jovis
Seinem Schosskinde
Der Phantasie.—*Goethe.*

† Sightless—too small to be seen.—*Leyge*

Where all my love is folly and the crowd
Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath—
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)
What tho' in worlds which own a single sun
The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run,
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given
To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven.
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky—
Apart—like fire-flies in Sicilian night,*
And wing to other worlds another light!
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy
To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be
To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,
The single-mooned eve!—on Earth we plight
Our faith to one love—and one moon adore—
The birthplace of young Beauty had no more.
As sprang that yellow star from downy hours
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,
And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain
Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan reign.†

* I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies;—they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre, into innumerable radii.

† Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which in a moment arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

PART II.

HIGH on a mountain of enamelled head—
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,
Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees
With many a muttered "hope to be forgiven"
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven—
Of rosy head, that towering far away
Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray
Of sunken suns at eve—at noon of night,
While the moon danced with the fair stranger light—
Upreared upon such height arose a pile
Of gorgeous columns on th' unburthened air,
Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.
Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall *
Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall
Of their own dissolution, while they die—
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.
A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,
Sat gently on these columns as a crown—
A window of one circular diamond, there,
Looked out above into the purple air,
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain
And hallowed all the beauty twice again,
Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring,
Some eager spirit flapped his dusky wing.
But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen
The dimness of this world: that greyish green
That nature loves the best for Beauty's grave
Lurked in each cornice, round each architrave—
And every sculptured cherub thereabout
That from his marble dwelling peeréd out,

* Some star which, from the ruin'd roof
Of shaked Olympus, by mischance, did fall.—*Milton.*

Seemed earthly in the shadow of his niche—
Achaian statues in a world so rich?
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis *—
From Baalbec, and the stilly, clear abyss
Of beautiful Gomorrha! O, the wave †
Is now upon thee—but too late to save!

Sound loves to revel in a summer night:
Witness the murmur of the grey twilight
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,‡
Of many a wild star-gazer long ago—
That stealeth ever on the ear of him
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim.
And sees the darkness coming as a cloud—
Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and loud? §

But what is this!—it cometh—and it brings
A music with it—'tis the rush of wings—
A pause—and then a sweeping, falling strain
And Nesace is in her halls again.
From the wild energy of wanton haste
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;

* Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says, "Je connois bien l'admiration qu'inspirent ces ruines—mais un palais erigé au pied d'une chaine des rochers sterils—peut il être un chef d'œuvre des arts!"

† "Oh! the wave"—Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation; but, on its own shores, it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulphed in the "Dead Sea." In the Valley of Siddim were five—Admah, Zeboim, Zoar, Sodom, and Gomorrha. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulphed)—but the last is out of all reason.

It is said [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux] that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, etc. are seen above the surface. At *any* season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the "Asphaltites."

‡ Eyraco—Chaldea.

§ I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.

The zone that clung around her gentle waist
Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.
Within the centre of that hall to breathe
She paused and panted, Zanthe! all beneath
The fairy light that kissed her golden hair,
And longed to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

Young flowers were whispering in melody *
To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree:
Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grave, or moon-lit dell;
Yet silence came upon material things—
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls, and angel wings—
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

"'Neath blue-bell or streamer—
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
The moonbeam away— †
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance thro' the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like——eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now—
Arise! from your dreaming
In violet bowers,
To duty beseeming
These star-litten hours—

* "Fairies use flowers for their charactery."—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

† In Scripture is this passage—"The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." It is perhaps not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes.

And shake from your tresses
 Encumbered with dew
The breath of those kisses
 That cumber them too—
(O! how, without you, Love!
 Could angels be blest?)
Those kisses of true love
 That lulled ye to rest!
Up!—shake from your wing
 Each hindering thing:
The dew of the night—
 It would weigh down your flight;
And true love caresses—
 O! leave them apart!
They are light on the tresses,
 But lead on the heart.

Ligeia! Ligeia!
 My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
 Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
 On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
 Like the lone Albatross,*
Incumbent on night
 (As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
 On the harmony there?

Ligeia! wherever
 Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
 Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
 In a dreamy sleep—
But the strains still arise
 Which *thy* vigilance keep—

* The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

The sound of the rain,
 Which leaps down to the flower
And dances again
 In the rhythm of the shower—
The murmur that springs *
 From the growing of grass—
Are the music of things—
 But are modelled, alas!—
Away, then, my dearest,
 O! hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
 Beneath the moon-ray—
To lone lake that smiles,
 In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
 That enjewel its breast—
Where wild flowers, creeping,
 Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
 Full many a maid—
Some have left the cool glade, and
 Have slept with the bee—†
Arouse them, my maiden,
 On moorland and lea—
Go! breathe on their slumber,
 All softly in ear
The musical number
 They slumbered to hear—

* I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory :—"The verie essence, and, as it were, springeheade and origine of all musicke is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."

† The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight.

The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halcro—in whose mouth I admired its effect :—

"O! were there an island,
 Tho' ever so wild
Where woman might smile, and
 No man be beguiled," etc.

For what can awaken
An angel so soon
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which lulled him to rest?"

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro',
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight—
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light
That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds, afar,
O Death! from eye of God upon that star:
Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—
Sweet was that error—ev'n with *us* the breath
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—
To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy—
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life—
Beyond that death no immortality—
But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"—
And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell—
Apart from Heaven's Eternity—and yet how far from Hell!*

* With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueno—
Un dia puro—allegre—libre
Quiera—
Libre de amor—de zelo—
De odio—de esperanza—de rezelo.—*Luis Ponce de Leon.*

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which in some minds

What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim,
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two: they fell: for Heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts.
A maiden angel and her seraph-lover—
O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen—'mid "tears of perfect moan." *

He was a goödly spirit—he who fell:
A wanderer by moss-ymantled well—
A gazer on the lights that shine above—
A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair—
And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of woe)
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.
Here sate he with his love—his dark eye bent
With eagle gaze along the firmament:
Now turned it upon her—but ever then
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

"Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray!
How lovely 'tis to look so far away!
She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve
I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourned to leave.
That eve—that eve—I should remember well—
The sun-ray dropped, in Lemnos, with a spell

resembles the delirium of opium. The passionate excitement of love, and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication, are its less holy pleasures—the price of which, to those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf" as their residence after life, is final death and annihilation.

* There be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon.—*Milton.*

On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall—
And on my eye-lids—O, the heavy light!
How drowsily it weighed them into night!
On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan:
But O, that light!—I slumbered—Death, the while,
Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle
So softly that no single silken hair
Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

"The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon
Was a proud temple called the Parthenon;*
More beauty clung around her columned wall
Than even thy glowing bosom beats withal,†
And when old Time my wing did disenthral
Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower,
And years I left behind me in an hour.
What time upon her airy bounds I hung
One half the garden of her globe was flung
Unrolling as a chart unto my view—
Tenantless cities of the desert too!
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,
And half I wished to be again of men."

"My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee—
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman's loveliness—and passionate love."

"But list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
Failed, as my pennoned spirit leapt aloft,‡
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurled,

* It was entire in 1687—the most elevated spot in Athens.

† Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love.—*Marlowe.*

‡ Pennon, for pinion.—*Milton.*

Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And rolled a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before,
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth."

"We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us
Be given our lady's bidding to discuss:
We came, my love; around, above, below,
Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod
She grants to us as granted by her God—
But, Angelo, than thine grey Time unfurled
Never his fairy wing o'er fairer world!
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be
Headlong thitherward o'er the starry sea—
But when its glory swelled upon the sky,
As glowing Beauty's bust beneath man's eye,
We paused before the heritage of men,
And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty then!"

Thus in discourse, the lovers whiled away
The night that waned and waned and brought no day
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

TAMERLANE.

KIND solace in a dying hour!
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—
I will not madly deem that power
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
Unearthly pride hath revelled in—
I have no time to dote or dream:
You call it hope—that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire:
If I *can* hope—O God! I can—
Its fount is holier—more divine—
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit
Bowed from its wild pride into shame.
O yearning heart! I did inherit
Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the Jewels of my throne,
Halo of Hell! and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again—
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now:
The fevered diadem on my brow
I claimed and won usurpingly—
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
Rome to the Cæsar—this to me?

The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life:
The mists of the Taglay have shed
Nightly their dews upon my head,
And, I believe, the winged strife
And tumult of the headlong air
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell
('Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,
Appeared to my half-closing eye
The pageantry of monarchy;
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar
Came hurriedly upon me, telling
Of human battle, where my voice,
My own voice, silly child!—was swelling
(O! how my spirit would rejoice,
And leap within me at the cry)
The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head
Unsheltered—and the heavy wind
Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.
It was but man, I thought, who shed
Laurels upon me: and the rush—
The torrent of the chilly air
Gurgled within my ear the crush
Of empires—with the captive's prayer—
The hum of suitors—and the tone
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,
Usurped a tyranny which men

Have deemed since I have reached to power,
My innate nature—be it so:
But, father, there lived one who, then,
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire
Burned with a still intenser glow
(For passion must, with youth, expire)
E'en *then* who knew this iron heart
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words—alas!—to tell
The loveliness of loving well!
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are——shadows on th' unstable wind.
Thus I remember having dwelt
Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters—with their meaning—melt
To fantasies—with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!
Love as in infancy was mine—
'Twas such as angel minds above
Might envy; her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought
Were incense—then a goodly gift,
For they were childish and upright—
Pure—as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age—and love—together—
Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather—
And, when the friendly sunshine smiled.
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.

Young Love's first lesson is——the heart:
For 'mid that sunshine, and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,
And pour my spirit out in tears—
There was no need to speak the rest—
No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who asked no reason why,
But turned on me her quiet eye!

Yet *more* than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove,
When, on the mountain peak, alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone—
I had no being—but in thee:
The world, and all it did contain
In the earth—the air—the sea—
Its joy—its little lot of pain
That was new pleasure—the ideal,
Dim, vanities of dreams by night—
And dimmer nothings which were real—
(Shadows—and a more shadowy light!)
Parted upon their misty wings,
And, so, confusedly, became
Thine image and—a name—a name!
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you known
The passion, father? You have not:
A cottager, I marked a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
And murmured at such lowly lot—
But, just like any other dream,
Upon the vapour of the dew
My own had past, did not the beam
Of beauty which did while it thro'
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress
My mind with double loveliness.

We walked together on the crown
Of a high mountain which looked down
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills—
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,
But mystically—in such guise
That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes
I read, perhaps too carelessly—
A mingled feeling with my own—
The flush on her bright cheek, to me
Seemed to become a queenly throne
Too well that I should let it be
Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapped myself in grandeur then,
And donned a visionary crown—
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me—
But that, among the rabble—men,
Lion ambition is chained down—
And crouches to a keeper's hand—
Not so in deserts where the grand—
The wild—the terrible conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!—
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—
And who her sovereign? Timour—he
Whom the astonished people saw

Striding o'er empires haughtily
A diademed outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given,
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!
Which fall'st into the soul like rain
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,
And, failing in thy power to bless,
But leav'st the heart a wilderness!
Idea! which bindest life around
With music of so strange a sound
And beauty of so wild a birth—
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see
No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly—
And homeward turned his softened eye.
'Twas sunset: when the sun will part
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, *would* fly,
But *cannot*, from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon—tho' the white moon
Shed all the splendour of her noon,
Her smile is chilly—and *her* beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.
And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one—
For all we live to know is known
And all we seek to keep hath flown—
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall

With the noon-day beauty—which is all.
I reached my home—my home no more—
 For all had flown who made it so.
I passed from out its mossy door,
 And, tho' my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known—
 O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
 On beds of fire that burn below,
 An humbler heart—a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe—
 I *know*—for Death who comes for me
 From regions of the blest afar,
Where there is nothing to deceive,
 Hath left his iron gate ajar,
 And rays of truth you cannot see
 Are flashing thro' Eternity——
I do believe that Eblis hath
A snare in every human path—
Else how, when in the holy grove
I wandered of the idol, Love,—
Who daily scents his snowy wings
With incense of burnt-offerings
From the most unpolluted things,
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven
Above with trellised rays from Heaven
No mote may shun—no tiniest fly—
The light'ning of his eagle eye—
How was it that Ambition crept,
 Unseen, amid the revels there,
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt
 In the tangles of Love's very hair?

TO THE RIVER ——.

FAIR river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty—the unhidden heart—
The playful maziness of art
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks—
Which glistens then, and trembles—
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks
Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
Her image deeply lies—
His heart which trembles at the beam
Of her soul-searching eyes.

TO ———.

THE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips—and all thy melody
Of lip-begotten words—

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined
Then desolately fall,
O God! on my funereal mind
Like starlight on a pall—

Thy heart—*thy* heart!—I wake and sigh,
And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy—
Of the baubles that it may.

A DREAM.

In visions of the dark night
I have dreamed of joy departed —
But a waking dream of life and light
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream,
While all the world were chiding,
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam,
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,
So trembled from afar—
What could there be more purely bright
In Truth's day-star?

ROMANCE.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

FAIRYLAND.

Dim vales—and shadowy floods—
And cloudy-looking woods,
Whose forms we can't discover
For the tears that drip all over
Huge moons there wax and wane—
Again—again—again—
Every moment of the night—
Forever changing places—
And they put out the star-light
With the breath from their pale faces.
About twelve by the moon-dial
One more filmy than the rest
(A kind which, upon trial,
They have found to be the best)
Comes down—still down—and down
With its centre on the crown
Of a mountain's eminence,
While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, over halls,
Wherever they may be—
O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea—

Over spirits on the wing—
Over every drowsy thing—
And buries them up quite
In a labyrinth of light—
And then, how deep!—O, deep!
Is the passion of their sleep.
In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering
Is soaring in the skies,
With the tempests as they toss,
Like——almost any thing—
Or a yellow Albatross.
They use that moon no more
For the same end as before—
Videlicet a tent—
Which I think extravagant:
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies,
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!)
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

THE LAKE. TO ———

In spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less—
So lovely was the loneliness
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall
Upon that spot, as upon all,
And the mystic wind went by
Murmuring in melody—
Then—ah, then, I would awake
To the terror of the lone lake.

Yet that terror was not fright,
But a tremulous delight—
A feeling not the jewelled mine
Could teach or bribe me to define—
Nor Love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,
And in its gulf a fitting grave
For him who thence could solace bring
To his lone imagining—
Whose solitary soul could make
An Eden of that dim lake.

SONG.

I saw thee on thy bridal day—
 When a burning blush came o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
 The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light
 (Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
 Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—
 As such it well may pass—
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
 In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
 When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
 The world all love before thee.

TO M. L. S———.

Of all who hail thy presence as the morning—
Of all to whom thine absence is the night—
The blotting utterly from out High Heaven
The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee
Hourly for hope—for life—ah! above all,
For the resurrection of deep-buried faith
In Truth—in Virtue—in Humanity—
Of all who, on Despair's unhallowed bed
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen
At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!'
At the soft-murmured words that were fulfilled
In the seraphic glancing of thine eyes—
Of all who owe thee most—whose gratitude
Nearest resembles worship—oh, remember
The truest—the most fervently devoted,
And think that these weak lines are written by him—
By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think
His spirit is communing with an angel's.

EUREKA:

AN ESSAY ON

THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE.

[To the few who love me and whom I love—to those who feel rather than to those who think—to the dreamers and those who put faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this Book of Truths, not in its character of Truth-Teller, but for the Beauty that abounds in its Truth—constituting it true. To these I present the composition as an Art-Product alone,—let us say as a Romance; or, if I be not urging too lofty a claim, as a Poem.

What I here propound is true:—therefore it cannot die:—or if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die, it will "rise again to the Life Everlasting."

Nevertheless, it is as a Poem only that I wish this work to be judged after I am dead.]

IT is with humility really unassumed—it is with a sentiment even of awe—that I pen the opening sentence of this work: for of all conceivable subjects I approach the reader with the most solemn—the most comprehensive—the most difficult—the most august.

What terms shall I find sufficiently simple in their sublimity—sufficiently sublime in their simplicity—for the mere enunciation of my theme?

I design to speak *of the Physical, Metaphysical, and Mathematical—of the Material and Spiritual Universe:—of its Essence, its Origin, its Creation, its Present Condition and its Destiny.* I shall be so rash, morever, as to challenge the conclusions, and thus, in effect, to question the sagacity of many of the greatest and most justly reverenced of men.

In the beginning, let me as distinctly as possible announce—not the theorem which I hope to demonstrate

—for, whatever the mathematicians may assert, there is, in this world at least, *no such thing* as demonstration; but the ruling idea which, throughout this volume, I shall be continually endeavouring to suggest.

My general proposition, then, is this:—*In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation.*

In illustration of this idea, I propose to take such a survey of the Universe that the mind may be able really to receive and to perceive an individual impression.

He who from the top of Ætna casts his eyes leisurely around, is affected chiefly by the *extent* and *diversity* of the scene. Only by a rapid whirling on his heel could he hope to comprehend the panorama in the sublimity of its *oneness.* But as on the summit of Ætna, *no* man has thought of whirling on his heel, so no man has ever taken into his brain the full uniqueness of the prospect; and so, again, whatever considerations lie involved in this uniqueness, have as yet no practical existence for mankind.

I do not know a treatise in which a survey of the *Universe*—using the word in its most comprehensive and only legitimate acceptation—is taken at all; and it may be as well here to mention that by the term "Universe," wherever employed without qualification in this essay, I mean to designate *the utmost conceivable expanse of space with all things, spiritual and material, that can be imagined to exist within the compass of that expanse.* In speaking of what is *ordinarily* implied by the expression "Universe," I shall take a phrase of limitation, "the Universe of stars." Why this distinction is considered necessary will be seen in the sequel.

But even of treatises on the really limited, although always assumed as the *un*limited, Universe of *stars*, I know none in which a survey, even of this limited Universe, is so taken as to warrant deductions from its *individuality.* The nearest approach to such a work is made in the "Cosmos" of Alexander Von Humboldt. He presents the subject, however, *not* in its individuality but in its generality. His theme, in its last result, is the law of *each* portion of the merely physical Universe, as this law is related to the laws

of *every other* portion of this merely physical Universe. His design is simply synæretical. In a word, he discusses the universality of material relation, and discloses to the eye of Philosophy whatever inferences have hitherto lain hidden *behind* this universality. But however admirable be the succinctness with which he has treated each particular point of his topic, the mere multiplicity of these points occasions, necessarily, an amount of detail, and thus an involution of idea, which preclude all *individuality* of impression.

It seems to me that in aiming at this latter effect, and through it at the consequences, the conclusions, the suggestions, the speculations, or, if nothing better offer itself, the mere guesses which may result from it, we require something like a mental gyration on the heel. We need so rapid a revolution of all things about the central point of sight that, while the minutiæ vanish altogether, even the more conspicuous objects become blended into one. Among the vanishing minutiæ, in a survey of this kind, would be all exclusively terrestrial matters. The Earth would be considered in its planetary relations alone. A man in this view becomes mankind, mankind a member of the cosmical family of Intelligences.

And now, before proceeding to our subject proper, let me beg the reader's attention to an extract or two from a somewhat remarkable letter which appears to have been found corked in a bottle and floating on the *Mare Tenebrarum*—an ocean well described by the Nubian geographer, Ptolemy Hephestion, but little frequented in modern days unless by the Transcendentalists and some other divers for crotchets. The date of this letter, I confess, surprises me even more particularly than its contents ; for it seems to have been written in the year *two* thousand eight hundred and forty-eight. As for the passages I am about to transcribe, they, I fancy, will speak for themselves.*

"Do you know, my dear friend," says the writer, addressing, no doubt, a contemporary, "Do you know that it is scarcely more than eight or nine hundred years ago

* This letter agrees in the main with passages of "Mellonta Tauta,' vol. ii., pp. 520-534.—*Ed.*

since the metaphysicians first consented to relieve the people of the singular fancy that there exist *but two practicable roads to Truth!* Believe it if you can! It appears however, that long, long ago, in the night of Time, there lived a Turkish philosopher called Aries and surnamed Tottle." [Here, possibly, the letter-writer means Aristotle; the best names are wretchedly corrupted in two or three thousand years.] "The fame of this great man depended mainly upon his demonstration that sneezing is a natural provision, by means of which over-profound thinkers are enabled to expel superfluous ideas through the nose; but he obtained a scarcely less valuable celebrity as the founder, or at all events as the principal propagator, of what was termed the *de*ductive or *a priori* philosophy. He started with what he maintained to be axioms, or self-evident truths: and the now well-understood fact that *no* truths are *self*-evident, really does not make in the slightest degree against his speculations: it was sufficient for his purpose that the truths in question were evident at all. From axioms he proceeded, logically, to results. His most illustrious disciples were one Tuclid, a geometrician" [meaning Euclid], "and one Kant, a Dutchman, the originator of that species of Transcendentalism which, with the change merely of a C for a K, now bears his peculiar name.

"Well, Aries Tottle flourished supreme, until the advent of one Hogg, surnamed 'the Ettrick Shepherd,' who preached an entirely different system, which he called the *a posteriori* or *in*ductive. His plan referred altogether to sensation. He proceeded by observing, analyzing, and classifying facts—instantiæ Naturæ, as they were somewhat affectedly called—and arranging them into general laws. In a word, while the mode of Aries rested on *noumena*, that of Hogg depended on *phenomena;* and so great was the admiration excited by this latter system that, at its first introduction, Aries fell into general disrepute. Finally, however, he recovered ground, and was permitted to divide the empire of Philosophy with his more modern rival; the savans contenting themselves with proscribing all *other* competitors, past, present, and to come; putting an

end to all controversy on the topic by the promulgation of a Median law, to the effect that the Aristotelian and Baconian roads are, and of right ought to be, the sole possible avenues to knowledge: 'Baconian,' you must know, my dear friend," adds the letter-writer at this point, "was an adjective invented as equivalent to Hogg-ian, and at the same time more dignified and euphonious.

"Now I do assure you most positively," proceeds the epistle, "that I represent these matters fairly; and you can easily understand how restrictions so absurd on their very face must have operated in those days to retard the progress of true Science, which makes its most important advances—as all History will show—by seemingly intuitive *leaps*. These ancient ideas confined investigation to crawling; and I need not suggest to you that crawling, among varieties of locomotion, is a very capital thing of its kind; but because the tortoise is sure of foot, for this reason must we clip the wings of the eagles? For many centuries, so great was the infatuation about Hogg especially, that a virtual stop was put to all thinking, properly so called. No man dared utter a truth for which he felt himself indebted to his soul alone. It mattered not whether the truth was even demonstrably such; for the dogmatising philosophers of that epoch regarded only *the road* by which it professed to have been attained. The end, with them, was a point of no moment whatever: 'the means!' they vociferated—'let us look at the means!'—and if on scrutiny of the means, it was found to come neither under the category Hogg, nor under the category Aries (which means ram), why, then, the savans went no further, but calling the thinker a fool and branding him a 'theorist,' would never, thenceforward, have anything to do either with *him* or with his truths.

"Now, my dear friend," continues the letter-writer, "it cannot be maintained that by the crawling system exclusively adopted, men would arrive at the maximum amount of truth, even in any long series of ages; for the repression of imagination was an evil not to be counterbalanced even by *absolute* certainty in the snail processes. But their cer-

tainty was very far from absolute. The error of our progenitors was quite analogous with that of the wise-acre who fancies he must necessarily see an object the more distinctly the more closely he holds it to his eyes. They blinded themselves, too, with the impalpable titillating Scotch snuff of *detail;* and thus the boasted facts of the Hogg-ites were by no means always facts—a point of little importance but for the assumption that they always *were.* The vital taint, however, in Baconianism—its most lamentable fount of error—lay in its tendency to throw power and consideration into the hands of merely perceptive men, of those inter-Tritonic minnows, the microscopical savans, the diggers and pedlers of minute *facts*, for the most part in physical science—facts, all of which they retailed at the same price upon the highway; their value depending, it was supposed, simply upon the *fact of their fact*, without reference to their applicability or inapplicability in the development of those ultimate and only legitimate facts called Law.

"Than the persons," the letter goes on to say, "than the persons thus suddenly elevated by the Hogg-ian philosophy into a station for which they were unfitted, thus transferred from the sculleries into the parlours of Science, from its pantries into its pulpits; than these individuals a more intolerant, a more intolerable set of bigots and tyrants never existed on the face of the earth. Their creed, their text, and their sermon were alike the one word '*fact*'—but for the most part, even of this one word, they knew not even the meaning. On those who ventured to *disturb* their facts with the view of putting them in order and to use, the disciples of Hogg had no mercy whatever. All attempts at generalisation were met at once by the words 'theoretical,' 'theory,' 'theorist'—all *thought*, to be brief, was very properly resented as a personal affront to themselves. Cultivating the natural sciences to the exclusion of Metaphysics, the Mathematics, and Logic, many of these Bacon-engendered philosophers—one-idead, one-sided, and lame of a leg—were more wretchedly helpless—more miserably ignorant, in view of all the comprehensible ob-

jects of knowledge than the veriest unlettered hind who proves that he knows something at least, in admitting that he knows absolutely nothing.

"Nor had our forefathers any better right to talk about *certainty*, when pursuing, in blind confidence, the *a priori* path of axioms, or of the Ram. At innumerable points this path was scarcely as straight as a ram's-horn. The simple truth is, that the Aristotelians erected their castles upon a basis far less reliable than air; *for no such things as axioms ever existed or can possibly exist at all.* This they must have been very blind indeed not to see, or at least to suspect; for, even in their own day, many of their long-admitted 'axioms' had been abandoned: '*ex nihilo nihil fit*,' for example, and a 'thing cannot act where it is not,' and 'there cannot be antipodes,' and 'darkness cannot proceed from light.' These and numerous similar propositions formerly accepted, without hesitation, as axioms, or undeniable truths, were, even at the period of which I speak, seen to be altogether untenable: how absurd in these people, then, to persist in relying upon a basis, as immutable, whose mutability had become so repeatedly manifest!

"But, even through evidence afforded by themselves against themselves, it is easy to convict these *a priori* reasoners of the grossest unreason—it is easy to show the futility—the impalpability of their axioms in general. I have now lying before me"—it will be observed that we still proceed with the letter—"I have now lying before me a book printed about a thousand years ago. Pundit assures me that it is decidedly the cleverest ancient work on its topic, which is 'Logic.' The author, who was much esteemed in his day, was one Miller, or Mill; and we find it recorded of him, as a point of some importance, that he rode a mill-horse whom he called Jeremy Bentham:—but let us glance at the volume itself.

"Ah!—'Ability or inability to conceive,' says Mr. Mill, very properly, 'is *in no case* to be received as a criterion of axiomatic truth.' Now that this is a palpable truism, no one in his senses will deny. *Not* to admit the proposition,

is to insinuate a charge of variability in Truth itself, whose very title is a synonym of the Steadfast. If ability to conceive be taken as a criterion of Truth, then a truth to *David* Hume would very seldom be a truth to *Joe;* and ninety-nine hundredths of what is undeniable in Heaven, would be demonstrable falsity upon Earth. The proposition of Mr. Mill then, is sustained. I will not grant it to be an *axiom;* and this merely because I am showing that *no* axioms exist; but with a distinction which could not have been cavilled at even by Mr. Mill himself, I am ready to grant that, *if* an axiom *there be*, then the proposition of which we speak has the fullest right to be considered an axiom—that no *more* absolute axiom *is*—and consequently, that any subsequent proposition which shall conflict with this one primarily advanced, must be either a falsity in itself—that is to say, no axiom—or, if admitted axiomatic, must at once neutralise both itself and its predecessor.

"And now, by the logic of their own propounder, let us proceed to test any one of the axioms propounded. Let us give Mr. Mill the fairest of play. We will bring the point to no ordinary issue. We will select for investigation no commonplace axiom—no axiom of what, not the less preposterously because only impliedly, he terms his secondary class—as if a positive truth by definition could be either more or less positively a truth: we will select, I say, no axiom of an unquestionability so questionable as is to be found in Euclid. We will not talk, for example, about such propositions as that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, or that the whole is greater than any one of its parts. We will afford the logician *every* advantage. We will come at once to a proposition which he regards as the acme of the unquestionable—as the quintessence of axiomatic undeniability. Here it is:—'Contradictions cannot *both* be true—that is, cannot coëxist in nature.' Here Mr. Mill means, for instance,—and I give the most forcible instance conceivable,—that a tree must be either a tree or not a tree—that it cannot be at the same time a tree *and* not a tree: all which is quite reasonable of itself, and will answer remarkably well as an axiom, until we bring it into

collation with an axiom insisted upon a few pages before; in other words—words which I have previously employed —until we test it by the logic of its own propounder. 'A tree,' Mr. Mill asserts, 'must be either a tree or not a tree.' Very well: and now let me ask him *why*. To this little query there is but one response—I defy any man living to invent a second. The sole answer is this:—'Because we find it *impossible to conceive* that a tree can be anything else than a tree or not a tree.' This, I repeat, is Mr. Mill's sole answer—he will not *pretend* to suggest another; and yet by his own showing, his answer is clearly no answer at all—for has he not already required us to admit, *as an axiom*, that ability or inability to conceive, is *in no case* to be taken as a criterion of axiomatic truth? Thus all—absolutely *all* his argumentation is at sea without a rudder. Let it not be urged that an exception from the general rule is to be made in cases where the 'impossibility to conceive' is so peculiarly great as when we are called upon to conceive a tree *both* a tree and not a tree. Let no attempt, I say, be made at urging this sotticism; for, in the first place, there are no *degrees* of 'impossibility,' and thus no one impossible conception can be *more* peculiarly impossible than another impossible conception: in the second place, Mr. Mill himself —no doubt after thorough deliberation—has most distinctly and most rationally excluded all opportunity for exception by the emphasis of his proposition, that *in no case* is ability or inability to conceive, to be taken as a criterion of axiomatic truth: in the third place, even were exceptions admissible at all, it remains to be shown how any exception is admissible *here*. That a tree can be both a tree and not a tree is an idea which the angels, or the devils, *may* entertain, and which no doubt many an earthly Bedlamite or Transcendentalist *does*.

"Now I do not quarrel with these ancients," continues the letter-writer, "*so much* on account of the transparent frivolity of their logic—which, to be plain, was baseless, worthless, and fantastic altogether—as on account of their pompous and infatuate proscription of all *other* roads to Truth than the two narrow and crooked paths—the one of

creeping and the other of crawling—to which, in their ignorant perversity, they have dared to confine the Soul—the Soul which loves nothing so well as to soar in those regions of illimitable intuition which are utterly incognisant of '*path*.'

"By-the-bye, my dear friend, is it not an evidence of the mental slavery entailed upon those bigoted people by their Hogs and Rams, that in spite of the eternal prating of their savans about *roads* to Truth, none of them fell, even by accident, into what we now so distinctly perceive to be the broadest, the straightest, and most available of all mere roads—the great thoroughfare—the majestic highway of the *Consistent?* Is it not wonderful that they should have failed to deduce from the works of God the vitally momentous consideration that a *perfect consistency can be nothing but an absolute truth?* How plain—how rapid our progress since the late announcement of this proposition! By its means investigation has been taken out of the hands of the ground-moles and given as a duty rather than as a task to the true—to the *only* true thinkers—to the generally educated men of ardent imagination. These latter—our Keplers—our Laplaces—'speculate'—'theorise'—these are the terms—can you not fancy the shout of scorn with which they would be received by our progenitors, were it possible for them to be looking over my shoulders as I write? The Keplers, I repeat, speculate—theorise—and their theories are merely corrected—reduced—sifted—cleared, little by little, of their chaff of inconsistency—until at length there stands apparent an unencumbered *Consistency*—a consistency which the most stolid admit—because it is a consistency—to be an absolute and unquestionable *Truth*.

"I have often thought, my friend, that it must have puzzled these dogmaticians of a thousand years ago, to determine, even by which of their two boasted roads it is that the cryptographist attains the solution of the more complicated cyphers—or by which of them Champollion guided mankind to those important and innumerable truths which, for so many centuries, have lain entombed amid the phonetical hieroglyphics of Egypt. In especial, would it not have given these bigots some trouble to determine by which of

their two roads was reached the most momentous and sublime of *all* their truths—the truth—the fact of *gravitation?* Newton deduced it from the laws of Kepler. Kepler admitted that these laws he *guessed*—these laws whose investigation disclosed to the greatest of British astronomers that principle, the basis of all (existing) physical principle, in going behind which we enter at once the nebulous kingdom of Metaphysics. Yes!—these vital laws Kepler *guessed*—that is to say, he *imagined* them. Had he been asked to point out either the *de*ductive or *in*ductive route by which he attained them, his reply might have been—'I know nothing about *routes*—but I *do* know the machinery of the Universe. Here it is. I grasped it with *my soul*—I reached it through mere dint of *intuition.*' Alas, poor ignorant old man! Could not any metaphysician have told him that what he called 'intuition' was but the conviction resulting from *de*ductions or *in*ductions of which the processes were so shadowy as to have escaped his consciousness, eluded his reason, or bidden defiance to his capacity of expression? How great a pity it is that some 'moral philosopher' had not enlightened him about all this? How it would have comforted him on his death-bed to know that instead of having gone intuitively and thus unbecomingly, he had in fact, proceeded decorously and legitimately—that is to say Hogg-ishly, or at least Ram-ishly—into the vast halls where lay gleaming, untended, and hitherto untouched by mortal hand—unseen by mortal eye—the imperishable and priceless secrets of the Universe!

"Yes, Kepler was essentially a *theorist;* but this title, *now* of so much sanctity, was in those ancient days a designation of supreme contempt. It is only *now* that men begin to appreciate that divine old man—to sympathise with the prophetical and poetical rhapsody of his ever memorable words. For *my* part," continues the unknown correspondent, "I glow with a sacred fire when I even think of them, and feel that I shall never grow weary of their repetition:—In concluding this letter, let me have the real pleasure of transcribing them once again:—'*I care not whether my work be read now or by posterity. I can afford to*

wait a century for readers when God himself has waited six thousand years for an observer. I triumph. I have stolen the golden secret of the Egyptians. I will indulge my sacred fury.'"

Here end my quotations from this very unaccountable and, perhaps, somewhat impertinent epistle; and perhaps it would be folly to comment, in any respect, upon the chimerical, not to say revolutionary, fancies of the writer—whoever he is—fancies so radically at war with the well-considered and well-settled opinions of this age. Let us proceed, then, to our legitimate thesis, *The Universe.*

This thesis admits a choice between two modes of discussion:—We may *a*scend or *de*scend. Beginning at our own point of view, at the Earth on which we stand, we may pass to the other planets of our system, thence to the Sun, thence to our system considered collectively, and thence, through other systems, indefinitely outwards; or, commencing on high at some point as definite as we can make it or conceive it, we may come down to the habitation of Man. Usually, that is to say, in ordinary essays on Astronomy, the first of these two modes is, with certain reservation, adopted: this for the obvious reason that astronomical *facts*, merely, and principles, being the object, that object is best fulfilled in stepping from the known because proximate, gradually onward to the point where all certitude becomes lost in the remote. For my present purpose, however, that of enabling the mind to take in, as if from afar and at one glance, a distant conception of the *individual* Universe—it is clear that a descent to small from great—to the outskirts from the centre (if we could establish a centre)—to the end from the beginning (if we could fancy a beginning) would be the preferable course, but for the difficulty, if not impossibility, of presenting, in this course, to the unastronomical, a picture at all comprehensible in regard to such considerations as are involved in *quantity*—that is to say, in number, magnitude, and distance.

Now, distinctness—intelligibility, at all points, is a primary feature in my general design. On important topics it is better to be a good deal prolix than even a very little obscure. But abstruseness is a quality appertaining

to no subject *per se.* All are alike, in facility of comprehension, to him who approaches them by properly graduated steps. It is merely because a stepping-stone, here and there, is heedlessly left unsupplied in our road to Differential Calculus, that this latter is not altogether as simple a thing as a sonnet by Mr. Solomon Seesaw.

By way of admitting, then, no *chance* for misapprehension, I think it advisable to proceed as if even the more obvious facts of Astronomy were unknown to the reader. In combining the two modes of discussion to which I have referred, I propose to avail myself of the advantages peculiar to each —and very especially of the *iteration in detail* which will be unavoidable as a consequence of the plan. Commencing with a descent, I shall reserve for the return upwards those indispensable considerations of *quantity* to which allusion has already been made.

Let us begin, then, at once, with that merest of words, "Infinity." This, like "God," "spirit," and some other expressions of which the equivalents exist in all languages, is by no means the expression of an idea, but of an effort at one. It stands for the possible attempt at an impossible conception. Man needed a term by which to point out the *direction* of this effort—the cloud behind which lay, for ever invisible, the *object* of this attempt. A word, in fine, was demanded, by means of which one human being might put himself in relation at once with another human being and with a certain *tendency* of the human intellect. Out of this demand arose the word "Infinity;" which is thus the representative but of the *thought of a thought.*

As regards *that* infinity now considered—the infinity of space—we often hear it said that "its idea is admitted by the mind—is acquiesced in—is entertained—on account of the greater difficulty which attends the conception of a limit." But this is merely one of those *phrases* by which even profound thinkers, time out of mind, have occasionally taken pleasure in deceiving *themselves.* The quibble lies concealed in the word "difficulty." "The mind," we are told, "entertains the idea of *limitless,* through the greater *difficulty* which it finds in entertaining that of *limited,*

space." Now, were the proposition but fairly *put*, its absurdity would become transparent at once. Clearly, there is no mere *difficulty* in the case. The assertion intended, if presented *according* to its intention, and without sophistry, would run thus:—"The mind admits the idea of limitless, through the greater *impossibility* of entertaining that of limited, space."

It must be immediately seen that this is not a question of two statements between whose respective credibilities—or of two arguments between whose respective validities—the *reason* is called upon to decide—it is a matter of two conceptions, directly conflicting, and each avowedly impossible, one of which the *intellect* is supposed to be capable of entertaining, on account of the greater *impossibility* of entertaining the other. The choice is *not* made between two difficulties; it is merely *fancied* to be made between two impossibilities. Now of the former, there *are* degrees, but of the latter, none—just as our impertinent letter-writer has already suggested. A task *may* be more or less difficult; but it is either possible or not possible—there are no gradations. It *might* be more *difficult* to overthrow the Andes than an ant-hill; but it *can* be no more *impossible* to annihilate the matter of the one than the matter of the other. A man may jump ten feet with less *difficulty* than he can jump twenty, but the *impossibility* of his leaping to the moon is not a whit less than that of his leaping to the dog-star.

Since all this is undeniable; since the choice of the mind is to be made between *impossibilities* of conception; since one impossibility cannot be greater than another; and since thus, one cannot be preferred to another; the philosophers who not only maintain, on the grounds mentioned, man's *idea* of infinity, but on account of such supposititious idea, *infinity itself*—are plainly engaged in demonstrating one impossible thing to be possible by showing how it is that some one other thing—is impossible too. This, it will be said is nonsense, and perhaps it is; indeed I think it very capital nonsense, but forego all claim to it as nonsense of mine.

The readiest mode, however, of displaying the fallacy of the philosophical argument on this question is by simply adverting to a *fact* respecting it which has been hitherto quite overlooked—the fact that the argument alluded to both proves and disproves its own proposition. "The mind is impelled," say the theologians and others, "to admit a *First Cause*, by the superior difficulty it experiences in conceiving cause beyond cause without end." The quibble, as before, lies in the word "difficulty," but *here* what is it employed to sustain? A First Cause. And what is a First Cause? An ultimate termination of causes. And what is an ultimate termination of causes? Finity—the Finite. Thus the one quibble in two processes, by God knows how many philosophers, is made to support now Finity and now Infinity; could it not be brought to support something besides? As for the quibbles, *they* at least, are insupportable. But, to dismiss them; what they prove in the one case is the identical nothing which they demonstrate in the other.

Of course, no one will suppose that I here contend for the absolute impossibility of *that* which we attempt to convey in the word "Infinity." My purpose is but to show the folly of endeavouring to prove Infinity itself, or even our conception of it, by any such blundering ratiocination as that which is ordinarily employed.

Nevertheless, as an individual, I may be permitted to say that I *cannot* conceive Infinity, and am convinced that no human being can. A mind not thoroughly self-conscious, not accustomed to the introspective analysis of its own operations, will, it is true, often deceive itself by supposing that it *has* entertained the conception of which we speak. In the effort to entertain it, we proceed step beyond step, we fancy point still beyond point; and so long as we *continue* the effort, it may be said in fact, that we are *tending* to the formation of the idea designed; while the strength of the impression that we actually form or have formed, is in the ratio of the period during which we keep up the mental endeavour. But it is in the act of discontinuing the endeavour—of fulfilling (as we think) the

idea—of putting the finishing stroke (as we suppose) to the conception—that we overthrow at once the whole fabric of our fancy by resting upon some one ultimate, and therefore, definite point. This fact, however, we fail to perceive, on account of the absolute coincidence in time, between the settling down upon the ultimate point and the act of cessation in thinking. In attempting, on the other hand, to frame the idea of a *limited* space, we merely converse the processes which involve the impossibility.

We *believe* in a God. We may or may not *believe* in finite or in infinite space; but our belief in such cases is more properly designated as *faith*, and is a matter quite distinct from that belief proper—from that *intellectual* belief—which presupposes the mental conception.

The fact is, that, upon the enunciation of any one of that class of terms to which "Infinity" belongs—the class representing *thoughts of thought*—he who has a right to say that he thinks *at all*, feels himself called upon *not* to entertain a conception, but simply to direct his mental vision toward some given point in the intellectual firmament, where lies a nebula never to be resolved. To solve it, indeed, he makes no effort; for with a rapid instinct he comprehends not only the impossibility, but as regards all human purposes, the *inessentiality* of its solution. He perceives that the Deity has not *designed* it to be solved. He sees at once that it lies *out* of the brain of man, and even *how*, if not exactly *why*, it lies out of it. There *are* people, I am aware, who, busying themselves in attempts at the unattainable, acquire very easily by dint of the jargon they emit, among those thinkers-that-they-think with whom darkness and depth are synonymous, a kind of cuttle-fish reputation for profundity; but the finest quality of Thought is its self-cognisance; and with some little equivocation, it may be said that no fog of the mind can well be greater than that which, extending to the very boundaries of the mental domain, shuts out even these boundaries themselves from comprehension.

It will now be understood that in using the phrase "Infinity of Space," I make no call upon the reader to en-

tertain the impossible conception of an *absolute* infinity. I refer simply to the "*utmost conceivable expanse*" of space—a shadowy and fluctuating domain, now shrinking, now swelling, in accordance with the vacillating energies of the imagination.

Hitherto, the Universe of stars has always been considered as coincident with the Universe proper, as I have defined it in the commencement of this Discourse. It has been always either directly or indirectly assumed—at least since the dawn of intelligible Astronomy—that, were it possible for us to attain any given point in space, we should still find on all sides of us, an interminable succession of stars. This was the untenable idea of Pascal when making perhaps the most successful attempt ever made at periphrasing the conception for which we struggle in the word "Universe." "It is a sphere," he says, "of which the centre is everywhere, the circumference nowhere." But although this intended definition is, in fact, *no* definition of the Universe of *stars*, we may accept it, with some mental reservation, as a definition (rigorous enough for all practical purposes) of the Universe *proper*—that is to say, of the Universe of *space*. This latter, then, let us regard as "*a sphere of which the centre is everywhere, the circumference nowhere.*" In fact, while we find it impossible to fancy an *end* to space, we have no difficulty in picturing to ourselves any one of an infinity of *beginnings*.

As our starting point, then, let us adopt the *Godhead*. Of this Godhead, *in itself*, he alone is not imbecile—he alone is not impious who propounds—nothing. "*Nous ne connaissons rien*," says the Baron de Bielfeld—"*Nous ne connaissons rien de la nature ou de l'essence de Dieu:—pour savoir ce qu'il est, il faut être Dieu même.*"—"We know absolutely *nothing* of the nature or essence of God—in order to comprehend what he is, we should have to be God ourselves."

"*We should have to be God ourselves!*"—With a phrase so startling as this yet ringing in my ears, I nevertheless venture to demand if this our present ignorance of the Deity is an ignorance to which the soul is *everlastingly* condemned.

By *Him*, however—*now*, at least, the Incomprehensible —by Him—assuming him as *Spirit*—that is to say, as *not Matter* — a distinction which for all intelligible purposes will stand well instead of a definition—by Him, then existing as Spirit, let us content ourselves to-night with supposing to have been *created*, or made out of Nothing by dint of his Volition—at some point of Space which we will take as a centre—at some period into which we do not pretend to inquire, but at all events immensely remote—by Him, then again, let us suppose to have been created—*What?* This is a vitally momentous epoch in our considerations. *What* is it that we are justified—that alone we are justified in supposing to have been primarily and solely *created?*

We have attained a point where only *Intuition* can aid us—but now let me recur to the idea which I have already suggested as that alone which we can properly entertain of intuition. It is but *the conviction arising from those inductions or deductions of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason, or defy our capacity of expression.* With this understanding, I now assert—that an intuition altogether irresistible, although inexpressible, forces me to the conclusion that what God originally created—that that Matter which, by dint of his Volition, he first made from his spirit, or from Nihility, *could* have been nothing but Matter in its utmost conceivable state of —what?—of *Simplicity?*

This will be found the sole absolute *assumption* of my Discourse. I use the word "assumption" in its ordinary sense; yet I maintain that even this my primary proposition is very very far indeed from being really a mere assumption. Nothing was ever more certainly—no human conclusion was ever, in fact, more regularly—more rigorously *de*duced:—but, alas! the processes lie out of the human analysis—at all events are beyond the utterance of the human tongue.

Let us now endeavour to conceive what Matter must be when, or if, in its absolute extreme of *Simplicity.* Here the Reason flies at once to Imparticularity—to a particle —to *one* particle—a particle of *one* kind—of *one* character

—of *one* nature—of *one* size—of *one* form—a particle therefore, "*without* form and void"—a particle positively a particle at all points—a particle absolutely unique, individual, undivided, and not indivisible only because He who *created* it, by dint of his Will, can by an infinitely less energetic exercise of the same Will, as a matter of course, divide it.

Oneness, then, is all that I predicate of the originally created Matter; but I propose to show that this *Oneness is a principle abundantly sufficient to account for the constitution, the existing phenomena, and the plainly inevitable annihilation of at least the material Universe.*

The willing into being the primordial particle, has completed the act or more properly the *conception* of Creation. We now proceed to the ultimate purpose for which we are to suppose the Particle created—that is to say, the ultimate purpose so far as our considerations *yet* enable us to see it—the constitution of the Universe from it, the Particle.

This constitution has been effected by *forcing* the originally and therefore normally *One* into the abnormal condition of *Many*. An action of this character implies reaction. A diffusion from Unity under the conditions, involves a tendency to return into Unity—a tendency ineradicable until satisfied. But on these points I will speak more fully hereafter.

The assumption of absolute Unity in the primordial Particle includes that of infinite divisibility. Let us conceive the Particle then to be only not totally exhausted by diffusion into Space. From the one particle as a centre, let us suppose to be irradiated spherically—in all directions—to immeasurable but still definite distances in the previously vacant space—a certain inexpressibly great yet limited number of unimaginably yet not infinitely minute atoms.

Now, of these atoms thus diffused, or upon diffusion, what conditions are we permitted—not to assume but to infer, from consideration as well of their source as of the character of the design apparent in their diffusion? *Unity*

being their source, and *difference from Unity* the character of the design manifested in their diffusion, we are warranted in supposing this character to be at least *generally* preserved throughout the design, and to form a portion of the design itself—that is to say, we shall be warranted in conceiving continual differences at all points from the uniquity and simplicity of the origin. But for these reasons shall we be justified in imagining the atoms heterogeneous, dissimilar, unequal, and inequidistant? More explicitly, are we to consider no two atoms as, at their diffusion, of the same nature, or of the same form, or of the same size?—and after fulfilment of their diffusion into Space, is absolute inequidistance, each from each, to be understood of all of them? In such arrangement, under such conditions, we most easily and immediately comprehend the subsequent most feasible carrying out to completion of any such design as that which I have suggested—the design of variety out of unity—diversity out of sameness—heterogeneity out of homogeneity—complexity out of simplicity—in a word, the utmost possible multiplicity of *relation* out of the emphatically irrelative *One*. Undoubtedly, therefore, we *should* be warranted in assuming all that has been mentioned but for the reflection, first, that supererogation is not presumable of any Divine Act; and, secondly, that the object supposed in view appears as feasible when some of the conditions in question are dispensed with in the beginning as when all are understood immediately to exist. I mean to say that some are involved in the rest, or so instantaneous a consequence of them as to make the distinction inappreciable. Difference of *size*, for example, will at once be brought about through the tendency of one atom to a second, in preference to a third, on account of particular inequidistance; which is to be comprehended as *particular inequidistances between centres of quantity in neighbouring atoms of different form*—a matter not at all interfering with the generally equable distribution of the atoms. Difference of *kind*, too, is easily conceived to be merely a result of differences in size and form, taken more or less conjointly;—in fact, since the *Unity* of the Particle Proper implies absolute homogeneity,

we cannot imagine the atoms, at their diffusion, differing in kind without imagining at the same time a special exercise of the Divine Will at the emission of each atom, for the purpose of effecting in each a change of its essential nature: —so fantastic an idea is the less to be indulged as the object proposed is seen to be thoroughly attainable without such minute and elaborate interposition. We perceive, therefore, upon the whole, that it would be supererogatory, and consequently unphilosophical, to predicate of the atoms, in view of their purposes, anything more than *difference of form* at their dispersion, with particular inequidistance after it—all other differences arising at once out of these in the very first processes of mass-constitution:—We thus establish the Universe on a purely *geometrical* basis. Of course, it is by no means necessary to assume absolute difference even of form among *all* the atoms irradiated—any more than absolute particular inequidistance of each from each. We are required to conceive merely that no *neighbouring* atoms are of similar form—no atoms which can ever approximate, until their inevitable reunition at the end.

Although the immediate and perpetual *tendency* of the disunited atoms to return into their normal Unity, is implied, as I have said, in their abnormal diffusion, still it is clear that this tendency will be without consequence — a tendency and no more—until the diffusive energy, in ceasing to be exerted, shall leave *it*, the tendency, free to seek its satisfaction. The Divine Act, however, being considered as determinate, and discontinued on fulfilment of the diffusion, we understand, at once, a *reaction*—in other words, a *satisfiable* tendency of the disunited atoms to return into *One*.

But the diffusive energy being withdrawn, and the reaction having commenced in furtherance of the ultimate design—*that of the utmost possible Relation*—this design is now in danger of being frustrated, in detail, by reason of that very tendency to return which is to effect its accomplishment in general. *Multiplicity* is the object; but there is nothing to prevent proximate atoms from lapsing *at once*, through the now satisfiable tendency—*before* the fulfilment

of any ends proposed in multiplicity—into absolute oneness among themselves; there is nothing to impede the aggregation of various *unique* masses, at various points of space —in other words, nothing to interfere with the accumulation of various masses, each absolutely One.

For the effectual and thorough completion of the general design, we thus see the necessity for a repulsion of limited capacity—a separative *something* which, on withdrawal of the diffusive Volition, shall at the same time allow the approach, and forbid the junction, of the atoms; suffering them infinitely to approximate, while denying them positive contact; in a word, having the power—*up to a certain epoch*—of preventing their *coalition*, but no ability to interfere with their *coalescence* in any respect *or degree*. The repulsion, already considered as so peculiarly limited in other regards, must be understood, let me repeat, as having power to prevent absolute coalition, *only up to a certain epoch*. Unless we are to conceive that the appetite for Unity among the atoms is doomed to be satisfied *never*;—unless we are to conceive that what had a beginning is to have no end—a conception which cannot *really* be entertained, however much we may talk or dream of entertaining it—we are forced to conclude that the repulsive influence imagined, will, finally—under pressure of the *Uni-tendency collectively* applied, but never and in no degree *until*, on fulfilment of the Divine purposes, such collective application shall be naturally made —yield to a force which, at that ultimate epoch, shall be the superior force precisely to the extent required, and thus permit the universal subsidence into the inevitable, because original and therefore normal, *One*. The conditions here to be reconciled are difficult indeed; we cannot even comprehend the possibility of their conciliation; nevertheless, the apparent impossibility is brilliantly suggestive.

That the repulsive something actually exists, *we see*. Man neither employs, nor knows, a force sufficient to bring two atoms into contact. This is but the well-established proposition of the impenetrability of matter. All Experiment proves—all Philosophy admits it. The *design* of the repulsion—the necessity for its existence—I have en-

deavoured to show; but from all attempt at investigating its nature have religiously abstained; this on account of an intuitive conviction that the principle at issue is strictly spiritual—lies in a recess impervious to our present understanding—lies involved in a consideration of what now—in our human state—is *not* to be considered—in a consideration of *Spirit in itself*. I feel, in a word, that here the God has interposed, and here only, because here and here only the knot demanded the interposition of the God.

In fact, while the tendency of the diffused atoms to return into Unity, will be recognised at once as the principle of the Newtonian Gravity, what I have spoken of as a repulsive influence prescribing limits to the (immediate) satisfaction of the tendency, will be understood as *that* which we have been in the practice of designating now as heat, now as magnetism, now as electricity; displaying our ignorance of its awful character in the vacillation of the phraseology with which we endeavour to circumscribe it.

Calling it, merely for the moment, electricity, we know that all experimental analysis of electricity has given, as an ultimate result, the principle, or seeming principle, *heterogeneity*. *Only* where things differ, is electricity apparent; and it is presumable that they *never* differ where it is not developed at least, if not apparent. Now, this result is in the fullest keeping with that which I have reached unempirically. The design of the repulsive influence I have maintained to be that of preventing immediate Unity among the diffused atoms; and these atoms are represented as different each from each. *Difference* is their character—their essentiality—just as *no-difference* was the essentiality of their course. When we say, then, that an attempt to bring any two of these atoms together would induce an effort, on the part of the repulsive influence, to prevent the contact, we may as well use the strictly convertible sentence that an attempt to bring together any two differences will result in a development of electricity. All existing bodies of course are composed of these atoms in proximate contact, and are therefore to be considered as mere assemblages of more or fewer differences; and the resistance made by the

repulsive spirit, on bringing together any two such assemblages, would be in the ratio of the two sums of the differences in each—an expression which, when reduced, is equivalent to this:—*The amount of electricity developed on the approximation of two bodies is proportional to the difference between the respective sums of the atoms of which the bodies are composed.* That *no* two bodies are absolutely alike, is a simple corollary from all that has been here said. Electricity, therefore, existing always, is *developed* whenever *any* bodies, but *manifested* only when bodies *of appreciable difference*, are brought into approximation.

To electricity—so, for the present, continuing to call it—we *may* not be wrong in referring the various physical appearances of light, heat, and magnetism; but far less shall we be liable to err in attributing to this strictly spiritual principle the more important phenomena of vitality, consciousness, and *Thought.* On this topic, however, I need pause *here* merely to suggest that these phenomena, whether observed generally or in detail, seem to proceed *at least in the ratio of the heterogeneous.*

Discarding now the two equivocal terms "gravitation" and "electricity," let us adopt the more definite expressions, "*attraction*" and "*repulsion.*" The former is the body; the latter the soul: the one is the material, the other the spiritual, principle of the Universe. *No other principles exist. All* phenomena are referable to one or to the other, or to both combined. So rigorously is this the case—so thoroughly demonstrable is it that attraction and repulsion are the *sole* properties through which we perceive the Universe—in other words, by which Matter is manifested to Mind—that, for all merely argumentative purposes, we are fully justified in assuming that matter *exists* only as attraction and repulsion—that attraction and repulsion *are* matter—there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term "matter" and the terms "attraction" and "repulsion," taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions in Logic.

I said just now that what I have described as the tendency of the diffused atoms to return into their original

unity would be understood as the principle of the Newtonian law of gravity; and, in fact, there can be but little difficulty in such an understanding if we look at the Newtonian gravity in a merely general view, as a force impelling matter to seek matter; that is to say, when we pay no attention to the known *modus operandi* of the Newtonian force. The general coincidence satisfies us; but, upon looking closely, we see in detail much that appears incoincident, and much in regard to which no coincidence, at least, is established. For example: the Newtonian gravity, when we think of it in certain moods, does *not* seem to be a tendency to *oneness* at all, but rather a tendency of all bodies in all directions—a phrase apparently expressive of a tendency to diffusion. Here, then, is an incoincidence. Again; when we reflect on the mathematical *law* governing the Newtonian tendency, we see clearly that no coincidence has been made good in respect of the *modus operandi*, at least between gravitation as known to exist and that seemingly simple and direct tendency which I have assumed.

In fact, I have attained a point at which it will be advisable to strengthen my position by reversing my processes. So far, we have gone on *a priori*, from an abstract consideration of *Simplicity*, as that quality most likely to have characterised the original action of God. Let us now see whether the established facts of the Newtonian Gravitation may not afford us, *a posteriori*, some legitimate inductions.

What does the Newtonian law declare? That all bodies attract each other with forces proportional to the squares of their distances. Purposely, I have given, in the first place, the vulgar version of the law; and I confess that in this, as in most other vulgar versions of great truths, we find little of a suggestive character. Let us now adopt a more philosophical phraseology:—*Every atom, of every body, attracts every other atom, both of its own and of every other body, with a force which varies inversely as the squares of the distances between the attracting and attracted atom.* Here, indeed, a flood of suggestion bursts upon the mind.

But let us see distinctly what it was that Newton *proved* —according to the grossly irrational definitions of *proof* prescribed by the metaphysical schools. He was forced to content himself with showing how thoroughly the motions of an imaginary Universe, composed of attracting and attracted atoms obedient to the law he announced, coincide with those of the actually existing Universe so far as it comes under our observation. This was the amount of his *demonstration*—that is to say, this was the amount of it according to the conventional cant of the "philosophies." His successes added proof multiplied by proof—such proof as a sound intellect admits—but the *demonstration* of the law itself, persist the metaphysicians, had not been strengthened in any degree. "*Ocular, physical* proof," however, of attraction here upon Earth, in accordance with the Newtonian theory, was at length, much to the satisfaction of some intellectual grovellers, afforded. This proof arose collaterally and incidentally (as nearly all important truths have arisen) out of an attempt to ascertain the mean density of the Earth. In the famous Maskelyne, Cavendish, and Bailly experiments for this purpose, the attraction of the mass of a mountain was seen, felt, measured, and found to be mathematically consistent with the immortal theory of the British astronomer.

But in spite of this confirmation of that which needed none—in spite of the so-called corroboration of the "theory" by the so-called "occular and physical proof"—in spite of the *character* of this corroboration—the ideas which even really philosophical men cannot help imbibing of gravity—and, especially the ideas of it which ordinary men get and contentedly maintain, are *seen* to have been derived, for the most part, from a consideration of the principle as they find it developed—*merely in the planet upon which they stand.*

Now, to what does so partial a consideration tend—to what species of error does it give rise? On the Earth we *see* and *feel* only that gravity impels all bodies towards the *centre* of the Earth. No man in the common walks of life could be *made* to see or feel anything else—could be made to perceive that anything, anywhere, has a perpetual gravi-

tating tendency in any *other* direction than to the centre of the Earth; yet (with an exception hereafter to be specified) it is a fact that every earthly thing (not to speak now of every heavenly thing) has a tendency not *only* to the Earth's centre but in every conceivable direction besides.

Now, although the philosophic cannot be said to *err with* the vulgar in this matter, they nevertheless permit themselves to be influenced, without knowing it, by the *sentiment* of the vulgar idea. "Although the Pagan fables are not believed," says Bryant, in his very erudite "Mythology," "yet we forget ourselves continually and make inferences from them as from existing realities." I mean to assert that the merely *sensitive perception* of gravity as we experience it on Earth, beguiles mankind into the fancy of *concentralisation* or *especiality* respecting it—has been continually biasing towards this fancy even the mightiest intellects—perpetually, although imperceptibly, leading them away from the real characteristics of the principle; thus preventing them, up to this date, from ever getting a glimpse of that vital truth which lies in a diametrically opposite direction—behind the principle's *essential* characteristics—those, *not* of concentralisation or especiality—but of universality and diffusion. This "vital truth" is *Unity* as the *source* of the phenomenon.

Let me now repeat the definition of gravity:—*Every atom of every body attracts every other atom, both of its own and of every other body*, with a force which varies inversely as the squares of the distances of the attracting and attracted atom.

Here let the reader pause with me for a moment in contemplation of the miraculous—of the ineffable—of the altogether unimaginable complexity of relation involved in the fact that *each atom attracts every other atom*—involved merely in this fact of the attraction, without reference to the law or mode in which the attraction is manifested—involved *merely* in the fact that each atom attracts every other atom *at all*, in a wilderness of atoms so numerous that those which go to the composition of a cannon-ball exceed probably, in mere point of number, all the stars which go to the constitution of the Universe.

Had we discovered, simply, that each atom tended to some one favourite point — to some especially attractive atom—we should still have fallen upon a discovery which, in itself, would have sufficed to overwhelm the mind :—but what is it that we are actually called upon to comprehend? That each atom attracts—sympathises with the most delicate movements of every other atom, and with each and with all at the same time, and for ever, and according to a determinate law of which the complexity, even considered by itself solely, is utterly beyond the grasp of the imagination of man. If I propose to ascertain the influence of one mote in a sunbeam upon its neighbouring mote, I cannot accomplish my purpose without first counting and weighing all the atoms in the Universe, and defining the precise positions of all at one particular moment. If I venture to displace, by even the billionth part of an inch, the microscopical speck of dust which lies now upon the point of my finger, what is the character of that act upon which I have ventured? I have done a deed which shakes the Moon in her path, which causes the Sun to be no longer the sun, and which alters for ever the destiny of the multitudinous myriads of stars that roll and glow in the majestic presence of their Creator.

These ideas—conceptions such as *these*—unthoughtlike thoughts—soul-reveries rather than conclusions or even considerations of the intellect :—ideas, I repeat, such as these, are such as we can alone hope profitably to entertain in any effort at grasping the great principle, *Attraction*.

But now, *with* such ideas—with such a *vision* of the marvellous complexity of Attraction fairly in his mind—let any person competent of thought on such topics as these, set himself to the task of imagining a *principle* for the phenomena observed—a condition from which they sprang.

Does not so evident a brotherhood among the atoms point to a common parentage? Does not a sympathy so omniprevalent, so ineradicable, and so thoroughly irrespective, suggest a common paternity as its source? Does not one extreme impel the reason to the other? Does not the infinitude of division refer to the utterness of individuality?

Does not the entireness of the complex hint at the perfection of the simple? It is *not* that the atoms, as we see them, are divided or that they are complex in their relations—but that they are inconceivably divided and unutterably complex: it is the extremeness of the conditions to which I now allude, rather than to the conditions themselves. In a word, is it not because the atoms were, at some remote epoch of time, even *more than together*—is it not because originally, and therefore normally, they were *One*—that now in all circumstances—at all points—in all directions—by all modes of approach—in all relations and through all conditions—they struggle *back* to this absolutely, this irrelatively, this unconditionally *one?*

Some person may here demand:—"Why—since it is to the *One* that the atoms struggle back—do we not find and define Attraction 'a merely general tendency to a centre?' why, in especial, do not *your* atoms—the atoms which you describe as having been irradiated from a centre—proceed at once, rectilinearly, back to the central point of their origin?"

I reply that *they do;* as will be distinctly shown; but that the cause of their so doing is quite irrespective of the centre *as such.* They all tend rectilinearly towards a centre, because of the sphericity with which they have been irradiated into space. Each atom, forming one of a generally uniform globe of atoms, finds more atoms in the direction of the centre, of course, than in any other, and in that direction, therefore, is impelled—but is *not* thus impelled because the centre is *the point of its origin.* It is not to any *point* that the atoms are allied. It is not any *locality* either in the concrete or in the abstract, to which I suppose them bound. Nothing like *location* was conceived as their origin. Their source lies in the principle, *Unity. This* is their lost parent. *This* they seek always—immediately—in all directions—wherever it is even partially to be found; thus appeasing in some measure the ineradicable tendency while on the way to its absolute satisfaction in the end. It follows from all this, that any principle which shall be adequate to account for the *law* or *modus operandi* of the

attractive force in general, will account for this law in particular—that is to say, any principle which will show why the atoms should tend to their *general centre of irradiation* with forces inversely proportional to the squares of the distances will be admitted as satisfactorily accounting at the same time for the tendency, according to the same law, of these atoms each to each;—for the tendency to the centre *is* merely the tendency each to each, and not any tendency to a centre as such.—Thus it will be seen, also, that the establishment of my propositions would involve no *necessity* of modification in the terms of the Newtonian definition of Gravity, which declares that each atom attracts each other atom and so forth, and declares this merely; but (always under the supposition that what I propose be, in the end, admitted) it seems clear that some error might occasionally be avoided in the future processes of Science were a more ample phraseology adopted — for instance:—"Each atom tends to every other atom, etc., with a force etc.: *the general result being a tendency of all, with a similar force, to a general centre.*"

The reversal of our processes has thus brought us to an identical result; but while in the one process *intuition* was the starting point, in the other it was the goal. In commencing the former journey I could only say that, with an irresistible intuition, I *felt* Simplicity to have been made the characteristic of the original action of God—in ending the letter I can only declare that with an irresistible intuition, I perceive Unity to have been the source of the observed phenomena of the Newtonian gravitation. Thus, according to the schools, I *prove* nothing. So be it:—I design but to suggest—and to *convince* through the suggestion. I am proudly aware that there exist many of the most profound and cautiously discriminative human intellects which cannot *help* being abundantly content with my—suggestions. To these intellects—as to my own—there is no mathematical demonstration which *could* bring the least additional *true proof* of the great *Truth* which I have advanced—*the truth of Original Unity as the source—as the principle of the Universal Phenomena.* For my part I am not so sure that I speak and

see—I am not so sure that my heart beats and that my soul lives—of the rising of to-morrow's sun—a probability that as yet lies in the Future—I do not pretend to be one thousandth part as sure—as I am of the irretrievably bygone *Fact* that All Things and All Thoughts of Things, with all their ineffable Multiplicity of Relation, sprang at once into being from the primordial and irrelative *One.*

Referring to the Newtonian Gravity, Dr. Nichol, the eloquent author of "The Architecture of the Heavens," says:—"In truth we have no reason to suppose this great Law as now revealed to be the ultimate or simplest, and therefore the universal and all-comprehensive form of a great Ordinance. The mode in which its intensity diminishes with the element of distance, has not the aspect of an ultimate *principle;* which always assumes the simplicity and self-evidence of those axioms which constitute the basis of Geometry."

Now, it is quite true that "ultimate principles," in the common understanding of the words, always assume the simplicity of geometrical axioms—(as for "self-evidence," there is no such thing)—but these principles are clearly *not* "ultimate;" in other terms, what we are in the habit of calling principles are no principles, properly speaking—since there can be but one *principle*, the Volition of God. We have no right to assume, then, from what we observe in rules that we choose foolishly to name "principles," anything at all in respect to the characteristics of a principle proper. The "ultimate principles" of which Dr. Nichol speaks as having geometrical simplicity, may and do have this geometrical turn, as being part and parcel of a vast geometrical system, and thus a system of simplicity itself—in which, nevertheless, the *truly* ultimate principle is, *as we know*, the consummation of the complex—that is to say, of the unintelligible—for is it not the Spiritual Capacity of God?

I quoted Dr. Nichol's remark, however, not so much to question its philosophy, as by way of calling attention to the fact that while all men have admitted *some* principle as existing behind the law of Gravity no attempt has been

yet made to point out what this principle in particular *is*. —if we except perhaps occasional fantastic efforts at referring it to Magnetism, or Mesmerism, or Swedenborgianism, or Transcendentalism, or some other equally delicious *ism* of the same species, and invariably patronised by one and the same species of people. The great mind of Newton, while boldly grasping the Law itself, shrank from the principle of the Law. The more fluent and comprehensive at least, if not the more patient and profound, sagacity of Laplace had not the courage to attack it. But hesitation on the part of these two astronomers it is perhaps not so very difficult to understand. They, as well as all the first class of mathematicians, were mathematicians *solely*:—their intellect at least had a firmly-pronounced mathematico-physical tone. What lay not distinctly within the domain of Physics or of Mathematics seemed to them either Non-Entity or Shadow. Nevertheless, we may well wonder that Leibnitz, who was a marked exception to the general rule in these respects, and whose mental temperament was a singular admixture of the mathematical with the physico-metaphysical, did not at once investigate and establish the point at issue. Either Newton or Laplace, seeking a principle and discovering none *physical*, would have rested contentedly in the conclusion that there was absolutely none; but it is almost impossible to fancy of Leibnitz that, having exhausted in his search the physical dominions, he would not have stepped at once, boldly and hopefully, amid his old familiar haunts in the kingdom of Metaphysics. Here, indeed, it is clear that he *must* have adventured in search of the treasure — that he did not find it after all was perhaps because his fairy guide, Imagination, was not sufficiently well-grown or well-educated to direct him aright.

I observed just now that, in fact, there had been certain vague attempts at referring Gravity to some very uncertain *isms*. These attempts, however, although considered bold, and justly so considered, looked no further than to the generality—the merest generality—of the Newtonian Law. Its *modus operandi* has never, to my knowledge, been approached in the way of an effort at

explanation. It is therefore with no unwarranted fear of being taken for a madman at the outset, and before I can bring my propositions fairly to the eye of those who alone are competent to decide upon them, that I here declare the *modus operandi* of the Law of Gravity to be an exceedingly simple and perfectly explicable thing—that is to say, when we make our advances towards it in just gradations and in the true direction—when we regard it from the proper point of view.

Whether we reach the idea of absolute *Unity* as the source of All Things, from a consideration of Simplicity as the most probable characteristic of the original action of God;—whether we arrive at it from an inspection of the universality of relation in the gravitating phenomena;—or whether we attain it as a result of the mutual corroboration afforded by both processes;—still, the idea itself, if entertained at all, is entertained in inseparable connection with another idea—that of the condition of the Universe of stars as we *now* perceive it—that is to say, a condition of immeasurable *diffusion* through space. Now a connection between these two ideas—unity and diffusion—cannot be established unless through the entertainment of a third idea —that of *irradiation*. Absolute Unity being taken as a centre, then the existing Universe of stars is the result of *irradiation* from that centre.

Now, the laws of irradiation are *known*. They are part and parcel of the *sphere*. They belong to the class of *indisputable geometrical properties*. We say of them, "they are true—they are evident." To demand *why* they are true would be to demand why the axioms are true upon which their demonstration is based. *Nothing* is demonstrable, strictly speaking; but *if* anything *be*, then the properties — the laws in question are demonstrated.

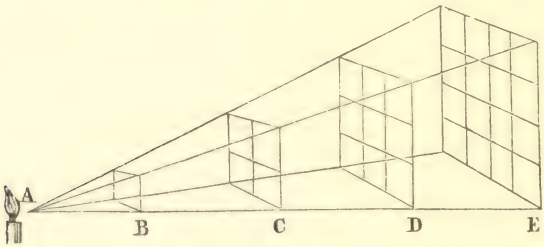
But these laws—what do they declare? Irradiation—how—by what steps does it proceed outwardly from a centre?

From a *luminous* centre *Light* issues by irradiation, and the quantities of light received upon any given plane, supposed to be shifting its position so as to be now nearer the

centre and now farther from it, will be diminished in the same proportion as the squares of the distances of the plane from the luminous body are increased; and will be increased in the same proportion as these squares are diminished.

The expression of the law may be thus generalised:—the number of light-particles (or, if the phrase be preferred, the number of light-impressions) received upon the shifting plane, will be *inversely* proportional to the squares of the distances of the plane. Generalising yet again, we may say that the diffusion—the scattering—the irradiation, in a word—is *directly* proportional to the squares of the distances.

For example: at the distance B, from the luminous centre A, a certain number of particles are so diffused as to occupy the surface B. Then at double the distance—that



is to say, at C—they will be so much farther diffused as to occupy four such surfaces:—at treble the distance, or at D, they will be so much farther separated as to occupy nine such surfaces;—while, at quadruple the distance, or at E, they will have become so scattered as to spread themselves over sixteen such surfaces—and so on for ever.

In saying, generally, that the irradiation proceeds in direct proportion with the squares of the distances, we use the term irradiation to express *the degree of the diffusion* as we proceed outwardly from the centre. Conversing the idea, and employing the word "concentralisation," to express *the degree of the drawing together* as we come back towards the centre from an outward position, we may say that concentralisation proceeds *inversely* as the squares of the distances.

In other words, we have reached the conclusion that, on the hypothesis that matter was originally irradiated from a centre, and is now returning to it, the concentralisation, in the return, proceeds *exactly as we know the force of gravitation to proceed.*

Now here, if we could be permitted to assume that concentralisation exactly represented the *force of the tendency to the centre*—that the one was exactly proportional to the other, and that the two proceeded together—we should have shown all that is required. The sole difficulty existing, then, is to establish a direct proportion between "concentralisation" and the *force* of concentralisation; and this is done, of course, if we establish such proportion between "irradiation" and the *force* of irradiation.

A very slight inspection of the Heavens assures us that the stars have a certain general uniformity, equability, or equidistance, of distribution through that region of space in which, collectively, and in a roughly globular form, they are situated:—this species of very general, rather than absolute equability, being in full keeping with my deduction of inequidistance, within certain limits, among the originally diffused atoms, as a corollary from the evident design of infinite complexity of relation out of irrelation. I started, it will be remembered, with the idea of a generally uniform but particularly *un*uniform distribution of the atoms;—an idea, I repeat, which an inspection of the stars, as they exist, confirms.

But even in the merely general equability of distribution, as regards the atoms, there appears a difficulty which, no doubt, has already suggested itself to those among my readers who have borne in mind that I suppose this equability of distribution effected through *irradiation from a centre.* The very first glance at the idea, irradiation, forces us to the entertainment of the hitherto unseparated and seemingly inseparable idea of agglomeration about a centre, with dispersion as we recede from it—the idea, in a word, of *in*equability of distribution in respect to the matter irradiated.

Now, I have elsewhere * observed, that it is by just such difficulties as the one now in question—such roughnesses—such peculiarities—such protuberances above the plane of the ordinary—that Reason feels her way, if at all, in her search for the True. By the difficulty—the "peculiarity"—now presented, I leap at once to *the* secret—a secret which I might never have attained *but* for the peculiarity and the inferences which, *in its mere character of peculiarity*, it affords me.

The process of thought, at this point, may be thus roughly sketched:—I say to myself—"Unity, as I have explained it, is a truth—I feel it. Diffusion is a truth—I see it. Irradiation, by which alone these two truths are reconciled, is a consequent truth—I perceive it. *Equability* of diffusion, first deduced *à priori* and then corroborated by the inspection of phenomena, is also a truth—I fully admit it. So far all is clear around me:—there are no clouds behind which *the* secret—the great secret of the gravitating *modus operandi*—can possibly lie hidden;—but this secret lies *hereabouts*, most assuredly; and *were* there but a cloud in view, I should be driven to suspicion of that cloud." And now, just as I say this, there actually comes a cloud into view. This cloud is the seeming impossibility of reconciling my truth, *irradiation*, with my truth, *equability of diffusion*. I say now:—"Behind this *seeming* impossibility is to be found what I desire." I do not say "*real* impossibility;" for invincible faith in my truths assures me that it is a mere difficulty after all; but I go on to say, with unflinching confidence, that, *when* this *difficulty* shall be solved, we shall find, *wrapped up in the process of solution*, the key to the secret at which we aim. Moreover—I *feel* that we shall discover *but one* possible solution of the difficulty; this for the reason that, were there two, one would be supererogatory—would be fruitless—would be empty—would contain no key—since no duplicate key can be needed to any secret of Nature.

And now, let us see:—Our usual notions of irradiation—in fact, *all* our distinct notions of it—are caught merely

* "*Murders in the Rue Morgue*," vol. i. p. 404.

from the process as we see it exemplified in *Light*. Here there is a *continuous* outpouring of *ray-streams*, and *with a force which we have at least no right to suppose varies at all*. Now, in any such irradiation *as this*—continuous and of unvarying force—the regions nearer the centre must *inevitably* be always more crowded with the irradiated matter than the regions more remote. But I have assumed *no* such irradiation *as this*. I assumed no *continuous* irradiation; and for the simple reason that such an assumption would have involved, first, the necessity of entertaining a conception which I have shown no man *can* entertain, and which (as I will more fully explain hereafter) all observation of the firmament refutes—the conception of the absolute infinity of the Universe of stars—and would have involved, secondly, the impossibility of understanding a reaction—that is, gravitation—as existing now—since, while an act is continued, no reaction of course can take place. My assumption, then, or rather my inevitable deduction from just premises,—was that of a *determinate* irradiation—one finally *dis*continued.

Let me now describe the sole possible mode in which it is conceivable that matter could have been diffused through space, so as to fulfil the conditions at once of irradiation and of generally equable distribution.

For convenience of illustration, let us imagine, in the first place, a hollow sphere of glass, or of anything else, occupying the space throughout which the universal matter is to be thus equally diffused, by means of irradiation, from the absolute, irrelative, unconditional particle, placed in the centre of the sphere.

Now, a certain exertion of the diffusive power (presumed to be the Divine Volition)—in other words, a certain *force*—whose measure is the quantity of matter, that is to say, the number of atoms, emitted—emits, by irradiation, this certain number of atoms; forcing them in all directions outwardly from the centre—their proximity to each other diminishing as they proceed—until, finally, they are distributed, loosely, over the interior surface of the sphere.

When these atoms have attained this position, or while

proceeding to attain it, a second and inferior exercise of the same force—or a second and inferior force of the same character—emits, in the same manner—that is to say, by irradiation as before—a second stratum of atoms which proceeds to deposit itself upon the first; the number of atoms, in this case as in the former, being of course the measure of the force which emitted them; in other words, the force being precisely adapted to the purpose it effects—the force, and the number of atoms sent out by the force, being *directly proportional.*

When this second stratum has reached its destined position—or while approaching it—a third still inferior exertion of the force, or a third inferior force of a similar character—the number of atoms emitted being in *all* cases the measure of the force—proceeds to deposit a third stratum upon the second, and so on, until these concentric strata, growing gradually less and less, come down at length to the central point, and the diffusive matter, simultaneously with the diffusive force, is exhausted.

We have now the sphere filled, through means of irradiation, with atoms equably diffused. The two necessary conditions—those of irradiation and of equable diffusion—are satisfied; and by the *sole* process in which the possibility of their simultaneous satisfaction is conceivable. For this reason I confidently expect to find, lurking in the present condition of the atoms as distributed throughout the sphere, the secret of which I am in search—the all-important principle of the *modus operandi* of the Newtonian law. Let us examine, then, the actual condition of the atoms.

They lie in a series of concentric strata. They are equably diffused throughout the sphere. They have been irradiated into these states.

The atoms being *equably* distributed, the greater the superficial extent of any of these concentric strata or spheres, the more atoms will lie upon it. In other words, the number of atoms lying upon the surface of any one of the concentric spheres, is directly proportional to the extent of that surface.

*But, in any series of concentric spheres, the surfaces are directly proportional to the squares of the distances from the centre.**

Therefore the number of atoms in any stratum is directly proportional to the square of that stratum's distance from the centre.

But the number of atoms in any stratum is the measure of the force which emitted that stratum—that is to say, is *directly proportional* to the force.

Therefore the force which irradiated any stratum is directly proportional to the square of that stratum's distance from the centre—or, generally,

The force of the irradiation has been directly proportional to the squares of the distances.

Now, Reaction, as far as we know anything of it, is Action conversed. The *general* principle of Gravity being, in the first place, understood as the reaction of an act—as the expression of a desire on the part of Matter, while existing in a state of diffusion, to return into the Unity whence it was diffused; and, in the second place, the mind being called upon to determine the *character* of the desire—the manner in which it would naturally be manifested; in other words, being called upon to conceive a probable law or *modus operandi* for the return, could not well help arriving at the conclusion that this law of return would be precisely the converse of the law of departure. That such would be the case any one at least would be abundantly justified in taking for granted, until such time as some person should suggest something like a plausible reason why it should *not* be the case—until such period as a law of return shall be imagined which the intellect can consider as preferable.

Matter, then, irradiated into space with a force varying as the squares of the distances, might *a priori* be supposed to return towards its centre of irradiation with a force varying *inversely* as the squares of the distances: and I have already shown† that any principle which will explain

* Succinctly—The surfaces of spheres are as the squares of their radii.

† Page 120.

why the atoms should tend, according to any law, to the general centre, must be admitted as satisfactorily explaining at the same time why, according to the same law, they should tend each to each. For, in fact, the tendency to the general centre is not to a centre as such, but because of its being a point in tending towards which each atom tends most directly to its real and essential centre, *Unity*—the absolute and final Union of all.

The consideration here involved presents to my own mind no embarrassment whatever—but this fact does not blind me to the possibility of its being obscure to those who may have been less in the habit of dealing with abstractions:—and, upon the whole, it may be as well to look at the matter from one or two other points of view.

The absolute, irrelative particle primarily created by the Volition of God, must have been in a condition of positive *normality*, or rightfulness—for wrongfulness implies *relation*. Right is positive; wrong is negative—is merely the negation of right; as cold is the negation of heat—darkness of light. That a thing may be wrong, it is necessary that there be some other thing in *relation* to which it *is* wrong—some condition which it fails to satisfy; some law which it violates; some being whom it aggrieves. If there be no such being, law, or condition, in respect to which the thing is wrong—and, still more especially, if no beings, laws, or conditions exist at all—then the thing can*not* be wrong, and consequently must be *right*. Any deviation from normality involves a tendency to return to it. A difference from the normal—from the right—from the just—can be understood as effected only by the overcoming a difficulty; and if the force which overcomes the difficulty be not infinitely continued, the ineradicable tendency to return will at length be permitted to act for its own satisfaction. Upon withdrawal of the force, the tendency acts. This is the principle of reaction as the inevitable consequence of finite action. Employing a phraseology of which the seeming affectation will be pardoned for its expressiveness, we may say that Reaction is the return from the condition of *as it is and ought not to be* into the condition of *as it was originally*

and therefore ought to be:—and let me add here that the *absolute* force of Reaction would no doubt be always found in direct proportion with the reality—the truth—the absoluteness—of the *originality*—if ever it were possible to measure this latter:—and, consequently, the greatest of all conceivable reactions must be that produced by the tendency which we now discuss—the tendency to return into the *absolutely original*—into the *supremely* primitive. Gravity, then, *must be the strongest of forces*—an idea reached *a priori* and abundantly confirmed by induction. What use I make of the idea will be seen in the sequel.

The atoms, now, having been diffused from their normal condition of Unity, seek to return to—what? Not to any particular *point*, certainly; for it is clear that if, upon the diffusion, the whole Universe of matter had been projected, collectively, to a distance from the point of irradiation, the atomic tendency to the general centre of the sphere would not have been disturbed in the least—the atoms would not have sought the point *in absolute space* from which they were originally impelled. It is merely the *condition*, and not the point or locality at which this condition took its rise, that these atoms seek to re-establish;—it is merely *that condition which is their normality* that they desire. "But they seek a centre," it will be said, "and a centre is a point." True; but they seek this point not in its character of point—(for, were the whole sphere moved from its position, they would seek, equally, the centre; and the centre *then* would be a *new* point)—but because it so happens, on account of the form in which they collectively exist—(that of the sphere)—that only *through* the point in question—the sphere's centre—they can attain their true object, Unity. In the direction of the centre each atom perceives more atoms than in any other direction. Each atom is impelled towards the centre, because along the straight line joining it and the centre and passing on to the circumference beyond, there lie a greater number of atoms than along any other straight line—a greater number of objects that seek it, the individual atom—a greater number of tendencies to Unity—a greater number of satisfactions for its own

tendency to Unity—in a word, because in the direction of the centre lies the utmost possibility of satisfaction, generally, for its own individual appetite. To be brief, the *condition*, Unity, is all that is really sought; and if the atoms *seem* to seek the centre of the sphere, it is only impliedly, through implication—because such centre happens to imply, to include, or to involve, the only essential centre, Unity. But *on account of* this implication or involution, there is no possibility of practically separating the tendency to Unity in the abstract, from the tendency to the concrete centre. Thus the tendency of the atoms to the general centre *is*, to all practical intents and for all logical purposes, the tendency each to each; and the tendency each to each *is* the tendency to the centre; and the one tendency may be assumed *as* the other; whatever will apply to the one must be thoroughly applicable to the other; and, in conclusion, whatever principle will satisfactorily explain the one, cannot be questioned as an explanation of the other.

In looking carefully around me for a rational objection to what I have advanced, I am able to discover *nothing;* but of that class of objections usually urged by the doubters for Doubt's sake, I very readily perceive *three;* and proceed to dispose of them in order.

It may be said, first—"That the proof that the force of irradiation (in the case described) is directly proportional to the squares of the distances, depends upon an unwarranted assumption—that of the number of atoms in each stratum being the measure of the force with which they are emitted."

I reply, not only that I am warranted in such assumption, but that I should be utterly *un*warranted in any other. What I assume is, simply, that an effect is the measure of its cause—that every exercise of the Divine Will will be proportional to that which demands the exertion—that the means of Omnipotence, or of Omniscience, will be exactly adapted to its purposes. Neither can a deficiency nor an excess of cause bring to pass any effect. Had the force which irradiated any stratum to its position, been either more or less than was needed

for the purpose; that is to say, not *directly proportional* to the purpose, then to its position that stratum could not have been irradiated. Had the force, which with a view to general equability of distribution, emitted the proper number of atoms for each stratum been not *directly proportional* to the number, then the number would *not* have been the number demanded for the equable distribution.

The second supposable objection is somewhat better entitled to an answer.

It is an admitted principle in Dynamics that everybody on receiving an impulse, or disposition to move, will move onward in a straight line, in the direction imparted by the impelling force, until deflected, or stopped by some other force. How then, it may be asked, is my first or external stratum of atoms to be understood as discontinuing their movement at the circumference of the imaginary glass sphere, when no second force of more than an imaginary character appears to account for the discontinuance?

I reply that the objection in this case actually does arise out of an "unwarranted assumption"—on the part of the objector—the assumption of a principle in Dynamics, at an epoch when *no* "principles" in *anything* exist. I use the word "principle," of course, in the objector's understanding of the word.

"In the beginning" we can admit—indeed we can comprehend but one *First Cause*, the truly ultimate *Principle*, the Volition of God. The primary *act*, that of Irradiation from Unity, must have been independent of all that which the world now calls "principle"—because all that we so designate is but a consequence of the reaction of that primary act. I say "*primary*" act, for the creation of the absolute material particle is more properly to be regarded as a *conception* than as an "*act*" in the ordinary meaning of the term. Thus we must regard the primary act as an act for the establishment of what we now call "principles." But this primary act itself is to be considered as *continuous Volition*. The Thought of God is to be understood as originating the Diffusion—as proceeding with it—as regulat-

ing it—and finally, as being withdrawn from it upon its completion. *Then* commences Reaction, and through Reaction "Principle," as we employ the word. It will be advisable, however, to limit the application of this word to the two *immediate* results of the discontinuance of the Divine Volition—that is, to the two agents, *Attraction* and *Repulsion*. Every other Natural agent depends, either more or less, immediately upon these two, and therefore would be more conveniently designated as *sub*-principle.

It may be objected, thirdly, that in general the peculiar mode of distribution which I have suggested for the atoms is "an hypothesis and nothing more."

Now I am aware that the word hypothesis is a ponderous sledge-hammer, grasped immediately, if not lifted, by all very diminutive thinkers, upon the first appearance of any proposition, wearing in any particular, the garb of *a theory*. But "hypothesis" cannot be wielded *here* to any good purpose, even by those who succeed in lifting it—little men or great.

I maintain, first, that *only* in the mode described is it conceivable that Matter could have been diffused so as to fulfil at once the conditions of irradiation and of generally equable distribution. I maintain, secondly, that these conditions themselves have been imposed upon me as necessities, in a train of ratiocination *as rigorously logical as that which establishes any demonstration in Euclid;* and I maintain, thirdly, that even if the charge of "hypothesis" were as fully sustained as it is, in fact, unsustained and untenable, still the validity and indisputability of my result would not, even in the slightest particular, be disturbed.

To explain: The Newtonian Gravity—a law of Nature—a law whose existence as such no one out of Bedlam questions—a law whose admission as such enables us to account for nine-tenths of the Universal phenomena—a law which merely because it does so enable us to account for these phenomena, we are perfectly willing, without reference to any other considerations, to admit, and cannot help admitting as a law—a law, nevertheless, of which neither the principle nor the *modus operandi* of the principle, has ever

yet been traced by the human analysis—a law, in short, which, neither in its detail nor in its generality, has been found susceptible of explanation *at all*—is at length seen to be at every point thoroughly explicable, provided we only yield our assent to — what? To an hypothesis? Why *if* an hypothesis—if the merest hypothesis—if an hypothesis for whose assumption—as in the case of that *pure* hypothesis the Newtonian law itself—no shadow of *a priori* reason could be assigned—if an hypothesis, even so absolute as all this implies, would enable us to perceive a principle for the Newtonian law—would enable us to understand as satisfied conditions so miraculously—so ineffably complex and seemingly irreconcileable as those involved in the relations of which Gravity tells us; what rational being *could so* expose his fatuity as to call even this absolute hypothesis an hypothesis any longer—unless, indeed, he were to persist in so calling it, with the understanding that he did so simply for the sake of consistency *in words?*

But what is the true state of our present case? What is *the fact?* Not only that it is *not* an hypothesis which we are required *to adopt*, in order to admit the principle at issue explained, but that it *is* a logical conclusion which we are requested *not* to adopt if we can avoid it—which we are simply invited to *deny if we can*—a conclusion of so accurate a logicality that to dispute it would be the effort—to doubt its validity beyond our power—a conclusion from which we see no mode of escape, turn as we will; a result which confronts us either at the end of an *in*ductive journey from the phenomena of the very Law discussed, or at the close of a *de*ductive career from the most rigorously simple of all conceivable assumptions—*the assumption, in a word, of Simplicity itself.*

And if here, for the mere sake of cavilling, it be urged that although my starting-point is, as I assert, the assumption of absolute Simplicity, yet Simplicity, considered merely in itself, is no axiom; and that only deductions from axioms are indisputable—it is thus that I reply:—

Every other science than Logic is the science of certain concrete relations. Arithmetic, for example, is the science

of the relations of number—Geometry, of the relations of form—Mathematics in general, of the relations of quantity in general—of whatever can be increased or diminished. Logic, however, is the science of Relation in the abstract—of absolute Relation—of Relation considered solely in itself. An axiom in any particular science other than Logic, is thus merely a proposition announcing certain concrete relations which seem to be too obvious for dispute—as when we say, for instance, that the whole is greater than its part; and thus again, the principle of the *Logical* axiom—in other words, of an axiom in the abstract—is simply *obviousness of relation.* Now, it is clear, not only that what is obvious to one mind may not be obvious to another, but that what is obvious to one mind at one epoch may be anything but obvious at another epoch to the same mind. It is clear, moreover, that what to-day is obvious even to the majority of mankind, or to the majority of the best intellects of mankind, may to-morrow be to either majority more or less obvious, or in no respect obvious at all. It is seen, then, that the *axiomatic principle* itself is susceptible of variation, and of course that axioms are susceptible of similar change. Being mutable, the "truths" which grow out of them are necessarily mutable too; or, in other words, are never to be positively depended upon as truths at all—since Truth and Immutability are one.

It will now be readily understood that no axiomatic idea—no idea founded in the fluctuating principle, obviousness of relation, can possibly be so secure, so reliable a basis for any structure erected by the Reason, as *that* idea—(whatever it is, wherever we can find it, or *if* it be practicable to find it anywhere)—which is *ir*relative altogether—which not only presents to the understanding *no obviousness* of relation, either greater or less to be considered, but subjects the intellect, not in the slightest degree, to the necessity of even looking at *any relation at all.* If such an idea be not what we too heedlessly term "an axiom," it is at least preferable, as a Logical basis, to any axiom ever propounded, or to all imaginable axioms combined; and such precisely is the idea with which my deductive process, so

thoroughly corroborated by induction, commences. My *particle proper* is but *absolute Irrelation.* To sum up what has been advanced:—As a starting point I have taken it for granted, simply, that the Beginning had nothing behind it or before it—that it was a beginning in fact—that it was a beginning and nothing different from a beginning—in short, that this Beginning was—*that which it was.* If this be a "mere assumption," then a "mere assumption" let it be.

To conclude this branch of the subject:—I am fully warranted in announcing that *the law which we have been in the habit of calling Gravity exists on account of Matter's having been irradiated, at its origin, atomically, into a limited* sphere of Space, from one, individual, unconditional, irrelative, and absolute Particle Proper, by the sole process in which it was possible to satisfy at the same time the two conditions, irradiation and generally-equable distribution throughout the sphere—that is to say, by a force varying in direct proportion with the squares of the distances between the irradiated atoms respectively and the particular centre of Irradiation.*

I have already given my reasons for presuming Matter to have been diffused by a determinate rather than by a continuous or infinitely continued force. Supposing a continuous force, we should be unable, in the first place, to comprehend a reaction at all; and we should be required, in the second place, to entertain the impossible conception of an infinite extension of Matter. Not to dwell upon the impossibility of the conception, the infinite extension of Matter is an idea which, if not positively disproved, is at least not in any respect warranted by telescopic observation of the stars—a point to be explained more fully hereafter; and this empirical reason for believing in the original finity of Matter is unempirically confirmed. For example:—Admitting, for the moment, the possibility of understanding Space *filled* with the irradiated atoms—that is to say, admitting, as well as we can, for argument's sake, that the succession of the irradiated atoms had absolutely *no end*—

* "Limited sphere." A sphere is *necessarily* limited. I prefer tautology to a chance of misconception."

then it is abundantly clear that, even when the Volition of God had been withdrawn from them, and thus the tendency to return into Unity permitted (abstractly) to be satisfied, this permission would have been nugatory and invalid—practically valueless and of no effect whatever. No Reaction could have taken place; no movement towards Unity could have been made; no Law of Gravity could have obtained.

To explain:—Grant the *abstract* tendency of any one atom to any one other as the inevitable result of diffusion from the normal Unity—or, what is the same thing, admit any given atom as *proposing* to move in any given direction—it is clear that, since there is an *infinity* of atoms on all sides of the atom proposing to move, it never can actually move towards the satisfaction of its tendency in the direction given, on account of a precisely equal and counter-balancing tendency in the direction diametrically opposite. In other words, exactly as many tendencies to Unity are behind the hesitating atom as before it; for it is a mere sotticism to say that one infinite line is longer or shorter than another infinite line, or that one infinite number is greater or less than another number that is infinite. Thus the atom in question must remain stationary for ever. Under the impossible circumstances which we have been merely endeavouring to conceive for argument's sake, there could have been no aggregation of Matter—no stars—no worlds—nothing but a perpetually atomic and inconsequential Universe. In fact, view it as we will, the whole idea of unlimited Matter is not only untenable, but impossible and preposterous.

With the understanding of a *sphere* of atoms, however, we perceive, at once, a *satisfiable* tendency to union. The general result of the tendency each to each, being a tendency of all to the centre, the *general* process of condensation or approximation commences immediately, by a common and simultaneous movement, on withdrawal of the Divine Volition; the *individual* approximations or coalescences—*not* coalitions—of atom with atom, being subject to almost infinite variations of time, degree, and condition, on account of the excessive multiplicity of relation, arising from the

differences of form assumed as characterising the atoms at the moment of their quitting the Particle Proper; as well as from the subsequent particular inequidistance, each from each.

What I wish to impress upon the reader is the certainty of there arising, at once (on withdrawal of the diffusive force, or Divine Volition), out of the condition of the atoms as described, at innumerable points throughout the Universal sphere, innumerable agglomerations, characterised by innumerable specific differences of form, size, essential nature, and distance, each from each. The development of Repulsion (Electricity) must have commenced of course with the very earliest particular efforts at Unity, and must have proceeded constantly in the ratio of Coalescence—that is to say, *in that of Condensation,* or, again, of Heterogeneity.

Thus the two Principles Proper, *Attraction and Repulsion*—the Material and the Spiritual—accompany each other, in the strictest fellowship for ever. Thus *The Body and The Soul walk hand in hand.*

If now, in fancy, we select *any one* of the agglomerations considered as in their primary stages throughout the Universal sphere, and suppose this incipient agglomeration to be taking place at that point where the centre of our Sun exists—or rather where it *did* exist originally; for the Sun is perpetually shifting his position—we shall find ourselves met, and borne onward for a time at least, by the most magnificent of theories—by the Nebular Cosmogony of Laplace:—although "Cosmogony" is far too comprehensive a term for what he really discusses—which is the constitution of our solar system alone—of one among the myriad of similar systems which make up the Universe Proper—that Universal sphere—that all-inclusive and absolute *Kosmos* which forms the subject of my present Discourse.

Confining himself to an *obviously limited* region—that of our solar system with its comparatively immediate vicinity—and *merely* assuming—that is to say, assuming without any basis whatever, either deductive or inductive—*much* of what I have been just endeavouring to place upon a more

stable basis than assumption; assuming, for example, matter as diffused (without pretending to account for the diffusion) throughout, and somewhat beyond, the space occupied by our system—diffused in a state of heterogeneous nebulosity and obedient to that omniprevalent law of Gravity at whose principle he ventured to make no guess; assuming all this (which is quite true, although he had no logical right to its assumption) Laplace has shown, dynamically and mathematically, that the results in such case necessarily ensuing are those and those alone which we find manifested in the actually existing condition of the system itself.

To explain:—Let us conceive *that* particular agglomeration of which we have just spoken—the one at the point designated by our Sun's centre—to have so far proceeded that a vast quantity of nebulous matter has here assumed a roughly globular form; its centre being of course coincident with what is now, or rather was originally, the centre of our Sun; and its periphery extending out beyond the orbit of Neptune, the most remote of our planets—in other words, let us suppose the diameter of this rough sphere to be some 6000 millions of miles. For ages this mass of matter has been undergoing condensation, until at length it has become reduced into the bulk we imagine; having proceeded gradually of course from its atomic and imperceptible state into what we understand of visible, palpable, or otherwise appreciable nebulosity.

Now, the condition of this mass implies a rotation about an imaginary axis—a rotation which, commencing with the absolute incipiency of the aggregation, has been ever since acquiring velocity. The very first two atoms which met, approaching each other from points not diametrically opposite, would, in rushing partially past each other, form a nucleus for the rotary movement described. How this would increase in velocity, is readily seen. The two atoms are joined by others—an aggregation is formed. The mass continues to rotate while condensing. But any atom at the circumference has of course a more rapid motion than one nearer the centre. The outer atom, however, with its superior velocity, approaches the centre; carrying this

superior velocity with it as it goes. Thus every atom, proceeding inwardly, and finally attaching itself to the condensed centre, adds something to the original velocity of that centre—that is to say, increases the rotary movement of the mass.

Let us now suppose this mass so far condensed that it occupies *precisely* the space circumscribed by the orbit of Neptune, and that the velocity with which the surface of the mass moves, in the general rotation, is precisely that velocity with which Neptune now revolves about the Sun. At this epoch, then, we are to understand that the constantly increasing centrifugal force, having got the better of the non-increasing centripetal, loosened and separated the exterior and least condensed stratum, or a few of the exterior and least condensed strata, at the equator of the sphere, where the tangential velocity predominated; so that these strata formed about the main body an independent ring encircling the equatorial regions — just as the exterior portion thrown off, by excessive velocity of rotation, from a grindstone, would form a ring about the grindstone, but for the solidity of the superficial material: were this caoutchouc, or anything similar in consistency, precisely the phenomenon I describe would be presented.

The ring thus whirled from the nebulous mass, *revolved* of course *as* a separate ring, with just that velocity with which, while the surface of the mass, it *rotated.* In the meantime, condensation still proceeding, the interval between the discharged ring and the main body continued to increase, until the former was left at a vast distance from the latter.

Now, admitting the ring to have possessed, by some seemingly accidental arrangement of its heterogeneous materials, a constitution nearly uniform, then this ring, *as* such, would never have ceased revolving about its primary; but, as might have been anticipated, there appears to have been enough irregularity in the disposition of the materials, to make them cluster about centres of superior solidity; and thus the annular form was destroyed.* No doubt, the band

* Laplace assumed his nebulosity heterogeneous, merely that he might be thus enabled to account for the breaking up of the rings;

was soon broken up into several portions, and one of these portions, predominating in mass, absorbed the others into itself; the whole settling, spherically, into a planet. That this latter, *as* a planet, continued the revolutionary movement which characterised it while a ring, is sufficiently clear; and that it took upon itself, also, an additional movement in its new condition of sphere, is readily explained. The ring being understood as yet unbroken, we see that its exterior, while the whole revolves about the parent body, moves more rapidly than its interior. When the rupture occurred, then, some portion in each fragment must have been moving with greater velocity than the others. The superior movement prevailing, must have whirled each fragment round—that is to say, have caused it to rotate; and the direction of the rotation must of course have been the direction of the revolution whence it arose. *All* the fragments having become subject to the rotation described, must, in coalescing, have imparted it to the one planet constituted by their coalescence.—This planet was Neptune. Its material continuing to undergo condensation, and the centrifugal force generated in its rotation, getting, at length, the better of the centripetal, as before in the case of the parent orb, a ring was whirled also from the equatorial surface of this planet: this ring, having been uniform in its constitution, was broken up, and its several fragments, being absorbed by the most massive, were collectively spherified into a moon. Subsequently, the operation was repeated, and a second moon was the result. We thus account for the planet Neptune, with the two satellites which accompany him.

In throwing off a ring from its equator, the Sun re-established that equilibrium between its centripetal and centrifugal forces which had been disturbed in the process of condensation; but, as this condensation still proceeded, the equilibrium was again immediately disturbed through

for had the nebulosity been homogeneous, they would not have broken. I reach the same result—heterogeneity of the secondary masses immediately resulting from the atoms—purely from an *a priori* consideration of their general design—*Relation.*

the increase of rotation. By the time the mass had so far shrunk that it occupied a spherical space just that circumscribed by the orbit of Uranus, we are to understand that the centrifugal force had so far obtained the ascendency that new relief was needed: a second equatorial band was consequently thrown off, which, proving ununiform, was broken up, as before in the case of Neptune; the fragments settling into the planet Uranus; the velocity of whose actual revolution about the Sun indicates of course the rotary speed of that Sun's equatorial surface at the moment of the separation. Uranus, adopting a rotation from the collective rotations of the fragments composing it, as previously explained, now threw off ring after ring; each of which, becoming broken up, settled into a moon:—other moons, at different epochs, having been formed in this manner by the rupture and general spherification of as many distinct ununiform rings.

By the time the Sun had shrunk until it occupied a space just that circumscribed by the orbit of Saturn, the balance, we are to suppose, between its centripetal and centrifugal forces had again become so far disturbed, through increase of rotary velocity, the result of condensation, that a third effort at equilibrium became necessary; and an annular band was therefore whirled off, as twice before; which, on rupture through ununiformity, became consolidated into the planet Saturn. This latter threw off, in the first place, seven uniform bands, which, on rupture, were spherified respectively into as many moons; but, subsequently, it appears to have discharged, at three distinct but not very distant epochs, three rings whose equability of constitution was, by apparent accident, so considerable as to present no occasion for their rupture; thus they continue to revolve as rings. I use the phrase "*apparent* accident;" for of accident in the ordinary sense there was of course nothing—the term is properly applied only to the result of indistinguishable or not immediate traceable *law*.

Shrinking still farther, until it occupied just the space circumscribed by the orbit of Jupiter, the Sun now found

need of farther effort to restore the counterbalance of its two forces, continually disarranged in the still continued increase of rotation. Jupiter, accordingly, was now thrown off; passing from the annular to the planetary condition; and, on attaining this latter, threw off in its turn, at four different epochs, four rings, which finally resolved themselves into so many moons.

Still shrinking, until its sphere occupied just the space defined by the orbit of the Asteroids, the Sun now discarded a ring which appears to have had *eight* centres of superior solidity, and, on breaking up, to have separated into eight fragments, no one of which so far predominated in mass as to absorb the others. All therefore, as distinct although comparatively small planets, proceeded to revolve in orbits whose distances, each from each, may be considered as in some degree the measure of the force which drove them asunder — all the orbits, nevertheless, being so closely coincident as to admit of our calling them *one*, in view of the other planetary orbits.

Continuing to shrink, the Sun, on becoming so small as just to fill the orbit of Mars, now discharged this planet —of course by the process repeatedly described. Having no moon, however, Mars could have thrown off no ring. In fact, an epoch had now arrived in the career of the parent body, the centre of the system. The *de*crease of its nebulosity, which is the *in*crease of its density, and which again is the *de*crease of its condensation, out of which latter arose the constant disturbance of equilibrium—must, by this period, have attained a point at which the efforts for restoration would have been more and more ineffectual just in proportion as they were less frequently needed. Thus the processes of which we have been speaking would everywhere show signs of exhaustion—in the planets first, and secondly in the original mass. We must not fall into the error of supposing the decrease of interval observed among the planets as we approach the Sun to be in any respect indicative of an increase of frequency in the periods at which they were discarded. Exactly the converse is to be under-

stood. The longest interval of time must have occurred between the discharges of the two interior; the shortest, between those of the two exterior, planets. The decrease of the interval of space is, nevertheless, the measure of the density, and thus inversely of the condensation, of the Sun, throughout the processes detailed.

Having shrunk, however, so far as to fill only the orbit of our Earth, the parent sphere whirled from itself still one other body—the Earth—in a condition so nebulous as to admit of this body's discarding, in its turn, yet another, which is our Moon;—but here terminated the lunar formations.

Finally, subsiding to the orbits first of Venus and then of Mercury, the Sun discarded these two interior planets; neither of which has given birth to any moon.

Thus from his original bulk—or, to speak more accurately, from the condition in which we first considered him—from a partially spherified nebular mass, *certainly* much more than 5600 millions of miles in diameter—the great central orb and origin of our solar-planetary-lunar system, has gradually descended, by condensation, in obedience to the law of Gravity, to a globe only 882,000 miles in diameter; but it by no means follows, either that its condensation is yet complete, or that it may not still possess the capacity of whirling from itself another planet.

I have here given—in outline, of course, but still with all the the detail necessary for distinctness—a view of the Nebular Theory as its author himself conceived it. From whatever point we regard it, we shall find it *beautifully true.* It is by far too beautiful, indeed, *not* to possess Truth as its essentiality—and here I am very profoundly serious in what I say. In the revolution of the satellities of Uranus, there does appear something *seemingly* inconsistent with the assumptions of Laplace; but that *one* apparent inconsistency can invalidate a theory constructed from a million of intricate consistencies, is a fancy fit only for the fantastic. In prophesying, confidently, that the apparent anomaly to which I refer, will, sooner or later, be found one of the strongest possible corroborations of the general hypothesis, I pretend

to no especial spirit of divination. It is a matter which the only difficulty seems *not* to foresee.*

The bodies whirled off in the processes described, would exchange, it has been seen, the superficial *rotation* of the orbs whence they originated, for a *revolution* of equal velocity about these orbs as distant centres; and the revolution thus engendered must proceed, so long as the centripetal force, or that with which the discarded body gravitates towards its parent, is neither greater nor less than that by which it was discarded—that is, than the centrifugal, or far more properly, than the tangential, velocity. From the unity, however, of the origin of these two forces, we might have expected to find them as they are found—the one accurately counterbalancing the other. It has been shown, indeed, that the act of whirling-off is, in every case, merely an act for the preservation of the counterbalance.

After referring, however, the centripetal force to the omniprevalent law of Gravity, it has been the fashion with astronomical treatises, to seek beyond the limits of mere Nature—that is to say, of *Secondary* Cause—a solution of the phenomenon of tangential velocity. This latter they attribute directly to a *First* Cause—to God. The force which carries a steller body around its primary they assert to have originated in an impulse given immediately by the finger—this is the childish phraseology employed—by the finger of Deity itself. In this view, the planets, fully formed, are conceived to have been hurled from the Divine hand, to a position in the vicinity of the suns, with an impetus mathematically adapted to the masses, or attractive capacities, of the suns themselves. An idea so grossly unphilosophical, although so supinely adopted, could have arisen only from the difficulty of otherwise accounting for the absolutely accurate adaptation, each to each, of two forces so seemingly independent one of the other, as are the gravitating and tangential. But it should be remembered that, for a long time, the coincidence between the moon's

* I am prepared to show that the anomalous revolution of the satellities of Uranus is a simply perspective anomaly arising from the inclination of the axis of the planet.

rotation and her sidereal revolution—two matters seemingly far more independent than those now considered—was looked upon as positively miraculous; and there was a strong disposition, even among astronomers, to attribute the marvel to the direct and continual agency of God—who, in this case, it was said, had found it necessary to interpose, specially among his general laws, a set of subsidiary regulations, for the purpose of for ever concealing from mortal eyes the glories, or perhaps the horrors, of the other side of the Moon—of that mysterious hemisphere which has always avoided, and must perpetually avoid, the telescopic scrutiny of mankind. The advance of Science, however, soon demonstrated—what to the philosophical instinct needed *no* demonstration — that the one movement is but a portion—something more even than a consequence—of the other.

For my part, I have no patience with fantasies at once so timorous, so idle, and so awkward. They belong to the veriest *cowardice* of thought. That Nature and the God of Nature are distinct, no thinking being can long doubt. By the former we imply merely the laws of the latter. But with the very idea of God, omnipotent, omniscient, we entertain also the idea of *the infallibility* of his laws. With Him there being neither Past nor Future—with Him all being *Now*—do we not insult him in supposing his laws so contrived as not to provide for every possible contingency? —or rather, what idea *can* we have of *any* possible contingency, except that it is at once a result and a manifestation of his laws? He who, divesting himself of prejudice, shall have the rare courage to think absolutely for himself, cannot fail to arrive in the end, at the condensation of *laws* into *Law*—cannot fail of reaching the conclusion that *each law of Nature is dependent at all points upon all other laws*, and that all are but consequences of one primary exercise of the Divine Volition. Such is the principle of the Cosmogony which, with all necessary deference, I here venture to suggest and to maintain.

In this view, it will be seen that, dismissing as frivolous, and even impious, the fancy of the tangential force having

been imparted to the planets immediately by "the finger of God," I consider this force as originating in the rotation of the stars—this rotation as brought about by the in-rushing of the primary atoms towards their respective centres of aggregation—this in-rushing as the consequence of the law of Gravity—this law as but the mode in which is necessarily manifested the tendency of the atoms to return into imparticularity — this tendency to return as but the inevitable reaction of the first and most sublime of Acts—that act by which a God, self-existing and alone existing, became all things at once through dint of his volition, while all things were thus constituted a portion of God.

The radical assumptions of this Discourse suggest to me, and in fact imply, certain important *modifications* of the Nebular Theory as given by Laplace. The efforts of the repulsive power I have considered as made for the purpose of preventing contact among the atoms, and thus as made in the ratio of the approach to contact—that is to say, in the ratio of condensation. In other words, *Electricity*, with its involute phenomena, heat, light, and magnetism, is to be understood as proceeding as condensation proceeds, and of course, inversely, as destiny proceeds, or the *cessation to condense*. Thus the Sun, in the process of its aggregation, must soon, in developing repulsion, have become excessively heated—perhaps incandescent; and we can perceive how the operation of discarding its rings must have been materially assisted by the slight incrustation of its surface consequent on cooling. Any common experiment shows us how readily a crust of the character suggested, is separated, through heterogeneity, from the interior mass. But on every successive rejection of the crust, the new surface would appear incandescent as before; and the period at which it would again become so far incrusted as to be readily loosened and discharged, may well be imagined as exactly coincident with that as which a new effort would be needed, by the whole mass, to restore the equilibrium of its two forces, disarranged through condensation. In other words—by the time the electric influence (Repulsion) has prepared the surface for rejection, we are to understand

that the gravitating influence (Attraction) is precisely ready to reject it. Here, then, as everywhere, *the Body and the Soul walk hand in hand.*

These ideas are empirically confirmed at all points. Since condensation can never, in any body, be considered as absolutely at an end, we are warranted in anticipating that, whenever we have an opportunity of testing the matter, we shall find indications of resident luminosity in *all* the stellar bodies—moons and planets as well as suns. That our Moon is strongly self-luminous, we see at every total eclipse, when, if not so, she would disappear. On the dark part of the satellite, too, during her phases, we often observe flashes like our own Auroras; and that these latter, with our various other so-called electrical phenomena, without reference to any more steady radiance, must give our Earth a certain appearance of luminosity to an inhabitant of the Moon, is quite evident. In fact, we should regard all the phenomena referred to as mere manifestations, in different moods and degrees, of the Earth's feebly-continued condensation.

If my views are tenable, we should be prepared to find the newer planets—that is to say, those nearer the Sun—more luminous than those older and more remote — and the extreme brilliancy of Venus (on whose dark portions, during her phases, the Auroras are frequently visible) does not seem to be altogether accounted for by her mere proximity to the central orb. She is no doubt vividly self-luminous, although less so than Mercury: while the luminosity of Neptune may be comparatively nothing.

Admitting what I have urged, it is clear that, from the moment of the Sun's discarding a ring, there must be a continuous diminution both of his heat and light, on account of the continuous incrustation of his surface; and that a period would arrive—the period immediately previous to a new discharge—when a *very material* decrease of both light and heat, must become apparent. Now, we know that tokens of such changes are distinctly recognisable. On the Melville islands—to adduce merely one out of a hundred examples—we find traces of *ultra-tropical* vegetation—of

plants that never could have flourished without immensely more light and heat than are at present afforded by our Sun to any portion of the surface of the Earth. Is such vegetation referable to an epoch immediately subsequent to the whirling-off of Venus? At this epoch must have occurred to us our greatest access of solar influence; and, in fact, this influence must then have attained its maximum —leaving out of view of course the period when the Earth itself was discarded—the period of its mere organisation.

Again:—we know that there exist *non-luminous suns*—that is to say, suns whose existence we determine through the movements of others, but whose luminosity is not sufficient to impress us. Are these suns invisible merely on account of the length of time elapsed since their discharge of a planet? And yet again:—may we not—at least in certain cases—account for the sudden appearances of suns where none had been previously suspected, by the hypothesis that, having rolled with incrusted surfaces throughout the few thousand years of our astronomical history, each of these suns, in whirling off a new secondary, has at length been enabled to display the glories of its still incandescent interior?—To the well-ascertained fact of the proportional increase of heat as we descend into the Earth, I need of course do nothing more than refer — it comes in the strongest possible corroboration of all that I have said on the topic now at issue.

In speaking, not long ago, of the repulsive or electrical influence, I remarked that "the important phenomena of vitality, consciousness, and thought, whether we observe them generally or in detail, seem to proceed *at least in the ratio of the heterogeneous.*"* I mentioned, too, that I would recur to the suggestion — and this is the proper point at which to do so. Looking at the matter first in detail, we perceive that not merely the *manifestation* of vitality, but its importance, consequences, and elevation of character keep pace very closely with the heterogeneity or complexity of the animal structure. Looking at the question, now, in its generality, and referring to the first movements of the

* Page 114.

atoms towards mass-constitution, we find that heterogeneousness, brought about directly through condensation, is proportional with it for ever. We thus reach the proposition that *the importance of the development of the terrestrial vitality proceeds equably with the terrestrial condensation.*

Now this is in precise accordance with what we know of the succession of animals on the Earth. As it has proceeded in its condensation, superior and still superior races have appeared. Is it impossible that the successive geological revolutions which have attended at least, if not immediately caused, these successive elevations of vitalic character—is it improbable that these revolutions have themselves been produced by the successive planetary discharges from the Sun—in other words, by the successive variations in the solar influence on the Earth? Were this idea tenable, we should not be unwarranted in the fancy that the discharge of yet a new planet, interior to Mercury, may give rise to yet a new modification of the terrestrial surface—a modification from which may spring a race both materially and spiritually superior to Man. These thoughts impress me with all the force of truth—but I throw them out of course merely in their obvious character of suggestion.

The Nebular Theory of Laplace has lately received far more confirmation than it needed, at the hands of the philosopher Comte. These two have thus together shown —*not*, to be sure, that Matter at any period actually existed as described, in a state of nebular diffusion, but that, admitting it so to have existed throughout the space and much beyond the space now occupied by our solar system, *and to have commenced a movement towards a centre*—it must gradually have assumed the various forms and motions which are now seen, in that system, to obtain. A demonstration such as this—a dynamical and mathematical demonstration, as far as demonstration can be—unquestionable and unquestioned—unless, indeed, by that unprofitable and disreputable tribe, the professional questioners—the mere madmen who deny the Newtonian law of Gravity on which the results of the French mathematicians are based —a demonstration, I say, such as this, would to most

intellects be conclusive—and I confess that it is so to mine —of the validity of the nebular hypothesis upon which the demonstration depends.

That the demonstration does not *prove* the hypothesis according to the common understanding of the word "proof," I admit, of course. To show that certain existing results—that certain established facts—may be, even mathematically, accounted for by the assumption of a certain hypothesis, is by no means to establish the hypothesis itself. In other words:—to show that certain *data* being given, a certain existing result might, or even *must*, have ensued, will fail to prove that this result *did* ensue *from the data*, until such time as it shall be also shown that there are, *and can be*, no other *data* from which the result in question might *equally* have ensued. But in the case now discussed, although all must admit the deficiency of what we are in the habit of terming "proof," still there are many intellects, and those of the loftiest order, to which *no* proof could bring one iota of additional *conviction*. Without going into details which might impinge upon the Cloud-Land of Metaphysics, I may as well here observe that the force of conviction, in cases such as this, will always with the right-thinking be proportional to the amount of *complexity* intervening between the hypothesis and the result. To be less abstract:—The greatness of the complexity found existing among cosmical conditions, by rendering great in the same proportion the difficulty of accounting for all these conditions, *at once* strengthens also in the same proportion our faith in that hypothesis which does in such manner satisfactorily account for them; and as *no* complexity can well be conceived greater than that of the astronomical conditions, so no conviction can be stronger, to *my* mind at least, than that with which I am impressed by an hypothesis that not only reconciles these conditions with mathematical accuracy, and reduces them into a consistent and intelligible whole, but is at the same time the *sole* hypothesis, by means of which the human intellect has been ever enabled to account for them *at all*.

A most unfounded opinion has been latterly current in

gossiping and even in scientific circles, the opinion that the the so-called Nebular Cosmogony has been overthrown. This fancy has arisen from the report of late observations made among what hitherto have been termed the "nebulæ," through the large telescope of Cincinnati, and the world-renowned instrument of Lord Rosse. Certain spots in the firmament which presented, even to the most powerful of the old telescopes, the appearance of nebulosity or haze, had been regarded for a long time as confirming the theory of Laplace. They were looked upon as stars in that very process of condensation which I have been attempting to describe. Thus it was supposed that we "had ocular evidence"—an evidence by the way which has always been found very questionable—of the truth of the hypothesis, and although certain telescopic improvements every now and then enabled us to perceive that a spot here and there, which we had been classing among the nebulæ, was, in fact, but a cluster of stars deriving its nebular character only from its immensity of distance, still it was thought that no doubt could exist as to the actual nebulosity of numerous other masses, the strongholds of the nebulists, bidding defiance to every effort at segregation. Of these latter the most interesting was the great nebulæ in the constellation Orion, but this, with innumerable other miscalled "nebulæ," when viewed through the magnificent modern telescopes, has become resolved into a simple collection of stars. Now this fact has been very generally understood as conclusive against the Nebular Hypothesis of Laplace, and on announcement of the discoveries in question the most enthusiastic defender and most eloquent populariser of the theory, Dr. Nichol, went so far as to "admit the necessity of abandoning" an idea which had formed the material of his most praiseworthy book.*

* "*Views of the Architecture of the Heavens.*" A letter purporting to be from Dr. Nichol to a friend in America, went the rounds of our newspapers about two years ago, I think, admitting "the necessity" to which I refer. In a subsequent lecture, however, Dr. N. appears in some manner to have gotten the better of the necessity, and does not quite *renounce* the theory, although he seems to wish that he could

Many of my readers will no doubt be inclined to say that the result of these new investigations *has* at least a strong *tendency* to overthrow the hypothesis, while some of them, more thoughtful, will suggest that although the theory is by no means disproved through the segregation of the particular nebulæ alluded to, still a *failure* to segregate them with such telescopes might well have been understood as a triumphant *corroboration* of the theory, and this latter class will be surprised perhaps to hear me say that even with *them* I disagree. If the propositions of this Discourse have been comprehended, it will be seen that in my view a failure to segregate the nebulæ would have tended to the refutation rather than to the confirmation of the Nebular Hypothesis.

Let me explain:—The Newtonian Law of Gravity we may of course assume as demonstrated. This law, it will be remembered, I have referred to the reaction of the first Divine Act—to the reaction of an exercise of the Divine Volition temporarily overcoming a difficulty. This difficulty is that of forcing the normal into the abnormal—of impelling that whose originality, and therefore whose rightful condition, was *One*, to take upon itself the wrongful condition of *Many*. It is only by conceiving this difficulty as *temporarily* overcome that we can comprehend a reaction. There could have been no reaction had the act been infinitely continued. So long as the act *lasted* no reaction of course could commence; in other words, no *gravitation* could take place, for we have considered the one as but the manifestation of the other. But gravitation *has* taken place, therefore the act of Creation has ceased, and gravitation has long ago taken place, therefore the act of Creation has long ago ceased. We can no more expect, then, to observe *the primary processes* of Creation, and to these primary processes the condition of nebulosity has already been explained to belong.

Through what we know of the propagation of light, we have direct proof that the more remote of the stars have

sneer at it as "a purely hypothetical one." What else was the Law of Gravity before the Maskelyne experiments? and who questioned the Law of Gravity even then?

existed under the forms in which we now see them for an inconceivable number of years. So far back *at least*, then, as the period when these stars underwent condensation, must have been the epoch at which the mass-constitutive processes began. That we may conceive these processes, then, as still going on in the case of certain nebulæ, while in all other cases we find them thoroughly at an end, we are forced into assumptions for which we have really *no* basis whatever — we have to thrust in again upon the revolting Reason the blasphemous idea of special interposition—we have to suppose that in the particular instances of these nebulæ, an unerring God found it necessary to introduce certain supplementary regulations, certain improvements of the general law, certain re-touchings and emendations, in a word, which had the effect of deferring the completion of these individual stars for centuries of centuries beyond the area during which all the other stellar bodies had time, not only to be fully constituted, but to grow hoary with an unspeakable old age.

Of course, it will be immediately objected that since the light by which we recognised the nebulæ now must be merely that which left their surfaces a vast number of years ago, the processes at present observed, or supposed to be observed, are, in fact, *not* processes now actually going on, but the phantoms of processes completed long in the Past—just as I maintain all these mass-constitutive processes *must* have been.

To this I reply that neither is the now-observed condition of the condensed stars their actual condition, but a condition completed long in the Past, so that my argument drawn from the *relative* condition of the stars and the nebulæ is in no manner disturbed. Moreover, those who maintain the existence of nebulæ do *not* refer the nebulosity to extreme distance, they declare it a real and not merely a perspective nebulosity. That we may conceive indeed a nebular mass as visible at all, we must conceive it as *very near us* in comparison with the condensed stars brought into view by the modern telescopes. In maintaining the appearances in question, then, to be really nebulous we

maintain their comparative vicinity to our point of view. Thus, their condition, as we see them now, must be referred to an epoch *far less remote* than that to which we may refer the now-observed condition of at least the majority of the stars. In a word, should Astronomy ever demonstrate a nebula, in the sense at present intended, I should consider the Nebular Cosmogony, *not* indeed as corroborated by the demonstration, but as thereby irretrievably overthrown.

By way, however, of rendering unto Cæsar *no more* than the things that are Cæsar's, let me here remark that the assumption of the hypothesis which led him to so glorious a result seems to have been suggested to Laplace in great measure by a misconception—by the very misconception of which we have just been speaking—by the generally prevalent misunderstanding of the character of the nebulæ, so misnamed. These he supposed to be, in reality, what their designation implies. The fact is, this great man had very properly an inferior faith in his own merely *perceptive* powers. In respect, therefore, to the actual existence of nebulæ, an existence so confidently maintained by his telescopic contemporaries, he depended less upon what he saw than upon what he heard.

It will be seen that the only valid objections to his theory are those made to its hypothesis *as* such, to what suggested it, not to what it suggests, to its propositions rather than to its results. His most unwarranted assumption was that of giving the atoms a movement towards a centre, in the very face of his evident understanding that these atoms, in unlimited succession, extended throughout the Universal space. I have already shown that under such circumstances there could have occurred no movement at all, and Laplace consequently assumed one on no more philosophical ground than that something of the kind was necessary for the establishment of what he intended to establish.

His original idea seems to have been a compound of the true Epicurean atoms with the false nebulæ of his contemporaries, and thus his theory presents us with the singular anomaly of absolute truth deduced, as a mathe-

matical result, from a hybrid *datum* of ancient imagination intertangled with modern inacumen. Laplace's real strength lay, in fact, in an almost miraculous mathematical instinct: —on this he relied, and in no instance did it fail or deceive him:—in the case of the Nebular Cosmogony it led him, blindfolded, through a labyrinth of Error into one of the most luminous and stupendous temples of Truth.

Let us now fancy, for the moment, that the ring first thrown off by the Sun, that is to say the ring whose breaking-up constituted Neptune, did not, in fact, break up until the throwing-off of the ring out of which Uranus arose; that this latter ring again remained perfect until the discharge of that out of which sprang Saturn; that this latter again remained entire until the discharge of that form which originated Jupiter—and so on. Let us imagine, in a word, that no dissolution occurred among the rings until the final rejection of that which gave birth to Mercury. We thus paint to the eye of the mind a series of coexistent concentric circles, and looking as well at *them* as at the processes by which, according to Laplace's hypothesis, they were constructed, we perceive at once a very singular analogy with the atomic strata and the process of the original irradiation as I have described it. Is it impossible that on measuring the *forces*, respectively, by which each successive planetary circle was thrown off—that is to say, on measuring the successive excesses of rotation over gravitation which occasioned the successive discharges—we should find the analogy in question more decidedly confirmed? *Is it improbable that we should discover these forces to have varied, as in the original radiation—proportionally to the squares of the distances?*

Our solar system, consisting, in chief, of one sun, with sixteen planets certainly, and possibly a few more, revolving about it at various distances, and attended by seventeen moons assuredly, but *very* probably by several others—is now to be considered as *an example* of the innumerable agglomerations which proceeded to take place throughout the Univeral Sphere of atoms on withdrawal of the Divine Volition. I mean to say that our solar system is to be understood as affording a *generic instance* of these agglomera-

tions, or, more correctly, of the ulterior conditions at which they arrived. If we keep our attention fixed on the idea of *the utmost possible Relation* as the Omnipotent design, and on the precautions taken to accomplish it through difference of form, among the original atoms, and particular inequidistance, we shall find it impossible to suppose for a moment that even any two of the incipient agglomerations reached precisely the same result in the end. We shall rather be inclined to think that no *two* stellar bodies in the Universe—whether suns, planets or moons—are particularly, while *all* are generally, similar. Still less, then, can we imagine any two *assemblages* of such bodies—any two "systems"—as having more than a general resemblance.* Our telescopes, at this point, thoroughly confirm our deductions. Taking our own solar system, then, as merely a loose or general type of all, we have so far proceeded in our subject as to survey the universe under the aspect of a spherical space, throughout which, dispersed with merely general equability, exist a number of but generally similar *systems.*

Let us now, expanding our conceptions, look upon each of these systems as in itself an atom; which in fact it is, when we consider it as but one of the countless myriads of systems which constitute the Universe. Regarding all, then, as but colossal atoms, each with the same ineradicable tendency to Unity which characterises the actual atoms of which it consists—we enter at once upon a new order of aggregations. The smaller systems, in the vicinity of a larger one, would inevitably be drawn into still closer vicinity. A thousand would assemble here; a million there—perhaps here, again, even a billion—leaving, thus, immeasurable vacancies in space. And if, now, it be demanded why, in the case of these systems—of these merely Titanic

* It is not *impossible* that some unlooked-for optical improvement may disclose to us, among innumerable varieties of systems, a luminous sun, encircled by luminous and non-luminous rings, within and without and between which, revolve luminous and non-luminous planets, attended by moons having moons—and even these latter again having moons.

atoms—I speak simply of an "assemblage," and not, as in the case of the actual atoms, of a more or less consolidated agglomeration:—if it be asked, for instance, why I do not carry what I suggest to its legitimate conclusion, and describe at once these assemblages of system-atoms as rushing to consolidation in spheres—as each becoming condensed into one magnificent sun—my reply is that μελλοντα ταυτα—I am but pausing for a moment on the threshold of *the Future*. For the present, calling these assemblages "clusters," we see them in the incipient stages of their consolidation. Their *absolute* consolidation is *to come*.

We have now reached a point from which we behold the Universe as a spherical space interspersed, *unequably*, with *clusters*. It will be noticed that I here prefer the adverb "unequably" to the phrase "with a merely general equability," employed before. It is evident, in fact, that the equability of distribution will diminish in the ratio of the agglomerative processes—that is to say, as the things distributed diminish in number. Thus the increase of *in*equability—an increase which must continue until, sooner or later, an epoch will arrive at which the largest agglomeration will absorb all the others—should be viewed as, simply, a corroborative indication of the *tendency to One*.

And here, at length, it seems proper to inquire whether the ascertained *facts* of Astronomy confirm the general arrangement which I have thus, deductively, assigned to the Heavens. Thoroughly they *do*. Telescopic observation, guided by the laws of perspective, enables us to understand that the perceptible Universe exists as *a cluster of clusters, irregularly disposed*.

The "clusters" of which this Universal "*cluster of clusters*" consists, are merely what we have been in the practice of designating "nebulæ"—and of these nebulæ *one* is of paramount interest to mankind. I allude to the Galaxy or Milky Way. This interests us, first and most obviously, on account of its great superiority in apparent size, not only to any one other cluster in the firmament, but to all the other clusters taken together. The largest of these latter occupies a mere point comparatively, and is

distinctly seen only with the aid of a telescope. The Galaxy sweeps throughout the Heaven and is brilliantly visible to the naked eye. But it interests man chiefly, although less immediately, on account of its being his home; the home of the Earth on which he exists; the home of the Sun about which this Earth revolves; the home of that "system" of orbs of which the Sun is the centre and primary—the Earth one of sixteen secondaries, or planets —the Moon one of seventeen tertiaries, or satellites. The Galaxy, let me repeat, is but one of the *clusters* which I have been describing—but one of the miscalled "nebulæ" revealed to us—by the telescope alone, sometimes—as faint hazy spots in various quarters of the sky. We have no reason to suppose the Milky Way *really* more extensive than the least of these nebulæ. Its vast superiority in size is but an apparent superiority arising from our position in regard to it—that is to say, from our position in its midst. However strange the assertion may at first appear to those unversed in Astronomy, still the astronomer himself has no hesitation in asserting that we are *in the midst* of that inconceivable host of stars—of suns—of systems—which constitute the Galaxy. Moreover, not only have *we*—not only has *our* Sun a right to claim the Galaxy as its own especial cluster, but, with slight reservation, it may be said that all the distinctly visible stars of the firmament—all the stars visible to the naked eye—have equally a right to claim it as *their* own.

There has been a great deal of misconception in respect to the *shape* of the Galaxy; which, in nearly all our astronomical treatises, is said to resemble that of a capital Y. The cluster in question has, in reality, a certain general—*very* general resemblance to the planet Saturn, with its encompassing triple ring. Instead of the solid orb of that planet, however, we must picture to ourselves a lenticular star-island, or collection of stars; our Sun lying excentrically—near the shore of the island—on that side of it which is nearest the constellation of the Cross and farthest from that of Cassiopeia. The surrounding ring, where it approaches our position, has in it a longitudinal *gash*, which does, in

fact, cause *the ring in our vicinity*, to assume, loosely, the appearance of a capital Y.

We must not fall into the error, however, of conceiving the somewhat indefinite girdle as at all *remote*, comparatively speaking, from the also indefinite lenticular cluster which it surrounds; and thus, for mere purpose of explanation, we may speak of our Sun as actually situated at that point of the Y where its three component lines unite; and, conceiving this letter to be of a certain solidity—of a certain thickness, very trivial in comparison with its length—we may even speak of our position as *in the middle* of this thickness. Fancying ourselves thus placed, we shall no longer find difficulty in accounting for the phenomena presented—which are perspective altogether. When we look upwards or downwards—that is to say, when we cast our eyes in the direction of the letter's *thickness*—we look through fewer stars than when we cast them in the direction of its *length* or *along* either of the three component lines. Of course, in the former case the stars appear scattered —in the latter, crowded. To reverse this explanation :— An inhabitant of the Earth when looking, as we commonly express ourselves, *at* the Galaxy, is then beholding it in some of the directions of its length—is looking *along* the lines of the Y—but when, looking out into the general Heaven, he turns his eyes *from* the Galaxy, he is then surveying it in the direction of the letter's thickness; and on this account the stars seem to him scattered; while, in fact, they are as close together, on an average, as in the mass of the cluster. *No* consideration could be better adapted to convey an idea of this cluster's stupendous extent.

If, with a telescope of high space-penetrating power, we carefully inspect the firmament, we shall become aware of *a belt of clusters*—of what we have hitherto called "nebulæ" —a *band*, of varying breadth, stretching from horizon to horizon, at right angles to the general course of the Milky Way. This band is the ultimate *cluster of clusters*. This belt is *The Universe*. Our Galaxy is but one, and perhaps one of the most inconsiderable, of the clusters which go to

the constitution of this ultimate Universal *belt* or *band*. The appearance of this cluster of clusters to our eyes, *as* a belt or band, is altogether a perspective phenomenon of the same character as that which causes us to behold our own individual and roughly-spherical cluster, the Galaxy, under guise also of a belt, traversing the Heavens at right angles to the Universal one. The shape of the all-inclusive cluster is of course *generally* that of each individual cluster which it includes. Just as the scattered stars which, on looking *from* the Galaxy, we see in the general sky, are in fact but a portion of that Galaxy itself, and as closely intermingled with it as any of the telescopic points in what seems the densest portion of its mass—so are the scattered nebulæ which on casting our eyes *from* the Universal *belt*, we perceive at all points of the firmament—so, I say, are these scattered nebulæ to be understood as only perspectively scattered, and as part and parcel of the one supreme and Universal *sphere*.

No astronomical fallacy is more untenable, and none has been more pertinaciously adhered to, than that of the absolute *illimitation* of the Universe of Stars. The reasons for limitation, as I have already assigned them, *a priori*, seem to me unanswerable; but, not to speak of these, *observation* assures us that there is, in numerous directions around us, certainly if not in all, a positive limit—or, at the very least, affords us no basis whatever for thinking otherwise. Were the succession of stars endless, then the background of the sky would present us an uniform luminosity like that displayed by the Galaxy—*since there could be absolutely no point, in all that background, at which would not exist a star*. The only mode, therefore, in which, under such a state of affairs, we could comprehend the *voids* which our telescopes find in innumerable directions, would be by supposing the distance of the invisible background so immense that no ray from it has yet been able to reach us at all. That this *may* be so, who shall venture to deny? I maintain, simply, that we have not even the shadow of a reason for believing that it *is* so.

When speaking of the vulgar propensity to regard all

bodies on the Earth as tending merely to the Earth's centre, I observed that, "with certain exceptions to be specified hereafter, every body on the Earth tended not only to the Earth's centre, but in every conceivable direction besides." * The "exceptions" refer to those frequent gaps in the Heavens, where our utmost scrutiny can detect not only no stellar bodies, but no indications of their existence —where yawning chasms, blacker than Erebus, seem to afford us glimpses, through the boundary walls of the Universe of Stars, into the illimitable Universe of Vacancy, beyond. Now as any body, existing on the Earth, chances to pass, either through its own movement or the Earth's, into a line with any one of these voids or cosmical abysses, it clearly is no longer attracted *in the direction of that void*, and for the moment, consequently, is "heavier" than at any period either after or before. Independently of the consideration of these voids, however, and looking only at the generally unequable distribution of the stars, we see that the absolute tendency of bodies on the Earth to the Earth's centre is in a state of perpetual variation.

We comprehend, then, the insulation of our Universe. We perceive the isolation of *that*—of *all* that which we grasp with the senses. We know that there exists one *cluster of clusters*—a collection around which, on all sides, extend the immeasurable wildernesses of a Space *to all human perception* untenanted. But *because* upon the confines of this Universe of Stars we are compelled to pause, through want of further evidence from the senses, is it right to conclude that, in fact, there *is* no material point beyond that which we have thus been permitted to attain? Have we, or have we not, an analogical right to the inference that this perceptible Universe—that this cluster of clusters—is but one of *a series* of clusters of clusters, the rest of which are invisible through distance—through the diffusion of their light being so excessive, ere it reaches us, as not to produce upon our retinas a light-impression—or from there being no such emanation as light at all in these unspeakably distant worlds—or, lastly, from the mere interval being so vast that the elec-

* Page 117.

tric tidings of their presence in Space have not yet—through the lapsing myriads of years—been enabled to traverse that interval?

Have we any right to inferences—have we any ground whatever for visions such as these? If we have a right to them in *any* degree, we have a right to their infinite extension.

The human brain has obviously a leaning to the "*Infinite*," and fondles the phantom of the idea. It seems to long with a passionate fervour for this impossible conception, with the hope of intellectually believing it when conceived. What is general among the whole race of Man, of course no individual of that race can be warranted in considering abnormal; nevertheless, there *may* be a class of superior intelligences, to whom the human bias alluded to may wear all the character of monomania.

My question, however, remains unanswered:—Have we any right to infer—let us say rather, to imagine—an interminable succession of the "clusters of clusters," or of "Universes" more or less similar?

I reply that the "right," in a case such as this, depends absolutely upon the hardihood of that imagination which ventures to claim the right. Let me declare only that, as an individual, I myself feel impelled to *fancy*—without daring to call it more—that there *does* exist a *limitless* succession of Universes, more or less similar to that of which we have cognisance—to that of which *alone* we shall ever have cognisance—at the very least until the return of our own particular Universe into Unity. *If* such clusters of clusters exist, however—*and they do*—it is abundantly clear that, having had no part in our origin, they have no portion in our laws. They neither attract us, nor we them. Their material—their spirit is not ours—is not that which obtains in any part of our Universe. They could not impress our senses or our souls. Among them and us—considering all for the moment, collectively—there are no influences in common. Each exists, apart and independently, *in the bosom of its proper and particular God.*

In the conduct of this Discourse, I am aiming less at

physical than at metaphysical order. The clearness with which even material phenomena are presented to the understanding, depends very little, I have long since learned to perceive, upon a merely natural, and almost altogether upon a moral, arrangement. If then I seem to step somewhat too discursively from point to point of my topic, let me suggest that I do so in the hope of thus the better keeping unbroken that chain of *graduated impression* by which alone the intellect of Man can expect to encompass the grandeurs of which I speak, and in their majestic totality, to comprehend them.

So far our attention has been directed almost exclusively to a general and relative grouping of the stellar bodies in space. Of specification there has been little; and whatever ideas of *quantity* have been conveyed—that is to say, of number, magnitude, and distance—have been conveyed incidentally and by way of preparation for more definitive conceptions. These latter let us now attempt to entertain.

Our solar system, as has been already mentioned, consists in chief, of one sun and sixteen planets certainly, but in all probability a few others, revolving around it as a centre, and attended by seventeen moons of which we know, with possibly several more of which as yet we know nothing. These various bodies are not true spheres, but oblate spheroids — spheres flattened at the poles of the imaginary axes about which they rotate—the flattening being a consequence of the rotation. Neither is the Sun absolutely the centre of the system; for this Sun itself, with all the planets, revolves about a perpetually shifting point of space, which is the system's general centre of gravity. Neither are we to consider the paths through which these different spheroids move—the moons about the planets, the planets about the Sun, or the Sun about the common centre—as circles in an accurate sense. They are, in fact, *ellipses—one of the foci being the point about which the revolution is made.* An ellipse is a curve, returning into itself, one of whose diameters is longer than the other. In the longer diameter are two points equidistant from the

middle of the line, and so situated otherwise that if, from each of them a straight line be drawn to any one point of the curve, the two lines taken together will be equal to the long diameter itself. Now let us conceive such an ellipse. At one of the points mentioned, which are the *foci*, let us fasten an orange. By an elastic thread let us connect this orange with a pea; and let us place this latter on the circumference of the ellipse. Let us now move the pea continuously around the orange — keeping always on the circumference of the ellipse. The elastic thread, which of course varies in length as we move the pea, will form what in geometry is called a *radius vector*. Now if the orange be understood as the Sun, and the pea as a planet revolving about it, then the revolution should be made at such a rate —with a velocity so varying—that the *radius vector* may pass over *equal areas of space in equal times*. The progress of the pea *should be*—in other words, the progress of the planet—*is* of course slow in proportion to its distance from the Sun—swift in proportion to its proximity. Those planets, moreover, move the more slowly which are the farther from the Sun; *the squares of their periods of resolution having the same proportion to each other, as have to each other the cubes of their mean distances from the Sun.*

The wonderfully complex laws of revolution here described, however, are not to be understood as obtaining in our system alone. They *everywhere* prevail where Attraction prevails. They control *the Universe*. Every shining speck in the firmament is, no doubt, a luminous Sun, resembling our own, at least in its general features, and having in attendance upon it a greater or less number of planets, greater or less, whose still lingering luminosity is not sufficient to render them visible to us at so vast a distance, but which, nevertheless, revolve, moon-attended, about their starry centres, in obedience to the principles just detailed—in obedience to the three omniprevalent laws of revolution—the three immortal laws *guessed* by the imaginative Kepler, and but subsequently demonstrated and accounted for by the patient and mathematical Newton. Among a tribe of philosophers who pride themselves exces-

sively upon matter-of-fact, it is far too fashionable to sneer at all speculation under the comprehensive *sobriquet*, "guess-work." The point to be considered is, *who* guesses. In guessing with Plato, we spend our time to better purpose, now and then, than in hearkening to a demonstration by Alcmæon.

In many works on Astronomy I find it distinctly stated that the laws of Kepler are *the basis* of the great principle, Gravitation. This idea must have arisen from the fact that the suggestion of these laws by Kepler, and his proving them *a posteriori* to have an actual existence, led Newton to account for them by the hypothesis of Gravitation, and, finally, to demonstrate them *a priori*, as necessary consequences of the hypothetical principle. Thus so far from the laws of Kepler being the basis of Gravity, Gravity is the basis of these laws—as it is, indeed, of all the laws of the material Universe which are not referable to Repulsion alone.

The mean distance of the Earth from the Moon—that is to say, from the heavenly body in our closest vicinity—is 237,000 miles. Mercury, the planet nearest the Sun, is distant from him 37 millions of miles. Venus, the next, revolves at a distance of 68 millions:—the Earth, which comes next, at a distance of 95 millions:—Mars, then, at a distance of 144 millions. Now come the eight Asteroids (Ceres, Juno, Vesta, Pallas, Astræa, Flora, Iris, and Hebe) at an average distance of about 250 millions. Then we have Jupiter, distant 490 millions; then Saturn, 900 millions; then Uranus, 19 hundred millions; finally Neptune, lately discovered, and revolving at a distance, say of 28 hundred millions. Leaving Neptune out of the account—of which as yet we know little accurately, and which is possibly one of a system of Asteroids—it will be seen that, within certain limits, there exists an *order of interval* among the planets. Speaking loosely, we may say that each outer planet is twice as far from the Sun as is the next inner one. May not the *order* here mentioned—*may not the law of Bode—be deduced from consideration of the analogy suggested by me as having place between the solar discharge of rings and the mode of the atomic irradiation?*

The numbers hurriedly mentioned in this summary of distance, it is folly to attempt comprehending, unless in the light of abstract arithmetical facts. They are not practically tangible ones. They convey no precise ideas. I have stated that Neptune, the planet farthest from the Sun, revolves about him at a distance of 28 hundred millions of miles. So far good:—I have stated a mathematical fact; and, without comprehending it in the least, we may put it to use —mathematically. But in mentioning, even, that the Moon revolves about the Earth at the comparatively trifling distance of 237,000 miles, I entertained no expectation of giving any one to understand—to know—to feel—how far from the Earth the Moon actually *is*. 237,000 *miles*. There are, perhaps, few of my readers who have not crossed the Atlantic ocean; yet how many of them have a distinct idea of even the 3000 miles intervening between shore and shore? I doubt, indeed, whether the man lives who can force into his brain the most remote conception of the interval between one milestone and its next neighbour upon the turnpike. We are in some measure aided, however, in our consideration of distance, by combining this consideration with the kindred one of velocity. Sound passes through 1100 feet of space in a second of time. Now were it possible for an inhabitant of the Earth to see the flash of a cannon discharged in the Moon, and to hear the report, he would have to wait, after perceiving the former, more than 13 entire days and nights before getting any intimation of the latter.

However feeble be the impression, even thus conveyed, of the Moon's real distance from the Earth, it will, nevertheless, effect a good object in enabling us more clearly to see the futility of attempting to grasp such intervals as that of the 28 hundred millions of miles between our Sun and Neptune; or even that of the 95 millions between the Sun and the Earth we inhabit. A cannon-ball, flying at the greatest velocity with which such a ball has ever been known to fly, could not traverse the latter interval in less than 20 years; while for the former it would require 590.

Our Moon's real diameter is 2160 miles; yet she is

comparatively so trifling an object that it would take nearly 50 such orbs to compose one as great as the Earth.

The diameter of our own globe is 7912 miles—but from the enunciation of these numbers what positive idea do we derive?

If we ascend an ordinary mountain and look around us from its summit, we behold a landscape stretching, say 40 miles, in every direction, forming a circle 250 miles in circumference, and including an area of 5000 square miles. The extent of such a prospect, on account of the *successiveness* with which its portions necessarily present themselves to view, can be only very feebly and very partially appreciated—yet the entire panorama would comprehend no more than one 40,000th part of the mere *surface* of our globe. Were this panorama, then, to be succeeded, after the lapse of an hour, by another of equal extent; this again by a third, after the lapse of an hour; this again by a fourth after lapse of another hour—and so on, until the scenery of the whole Earth were exhausted; and were we to be engaged in examining these various panoramas for twelve hours of every day; we should, nevertheless, be 9 years and 48 days in completing the general survey.

But if the mere surface of the Earth eludes the grasp of the imagination, what are we to think of its cubical contents? It embraces a mass of matter equal in weight to at least two sextillions, two hundred quintillions of tons. Let us suppose it in a state of quiescence; and now let us endeavour to conceive a mechanical force sufficient to set it in motion! Not the strength of all the myriads of beings whom we may conclude to inhabit the planetary worlds of our system — not the combined physical strength of *all* these beings—even admitting all to be more powerful than man—would avail to stir the ponderous mass *a single inch* from its position.

What are we to understand, then, of the force which, under similar circumstances, would be required to move the *largest* of our planets, Jupiter? This is 86,000 miles in diameter, and would include within its periphery more than a thousand orbs of the magnitude of our own. Yet this

stupendous body is actually flying around the sun at the rate of 29,000 miles an hour—that is to say, with a velocity forty times greater than that of a cannon-ball! The thought of such a phenomenon cannot well be said to *startle* the mind—it palsies and appals it. Not unfrequently we task our imagination in picturing the capacities of an angel. Let us fancy such a being at a distance of some hundred miles from Jupiter—a close eye-witness of this planet as it speeds on its annual revolution. Now *can* we, I demand, fashion for ourselves any conception so distinct of this ideal being's spiritual exaltation, as *that* involved in the supposition that, even by this immeasurable mass of matter, whirled immediately before his eyes, with a velocity so unutterable, he—an angel—angelic though he be—is not at once struck into nothingness and overwhelmed?

At this point, however, it seems proper to suggest that, in fact, we have been speaking of comparative trifles. Our Sun—the central and controlling orb of the system to which Jupiter belongs—is not only greater than Jupiter, but greater by far than all the planets of the system taken together. This fact is an essential condition indeed of the stability of the system itself. The diameter of Jupiter has been mentioned; it is 86,000 miles—that of the Sun is 882,000 miles. An inhabitant of the latter, travelling ninety miles a day, would be more than eighty years in going round a great circle of its circumference. It occupies a cubical space of 681 quadrillions, 472 trillions of miles. The Moon, as has been stated, revolves about the Earth at a distance of 237,000 miles—in an orbit, consequently, of nearly a million and a half. Now, were the Sun placed upon the Earth, centre over centre, the body of the former would extend, in every direction, not only to the line of the Moon's orbit, but beyond it, a distance of 200,000 miles.

And here, once again, let me suggest that, in fact, we have *still* been speaking of comparative trifles. The distance of the planet Neptune from the Sun has been stated; it is 28 hundred millions of miles: the circumference of its orbit, therefore, is about 17 billions. Let this be borne in mind

while we glance at some one of the brighest stars. Between this and the star of *our* system (the Sun), there is a gulf of space, to convey any idea of which we should need the tongue of an archangel. From *our* system, then, and from *our* Sun, or star, the star at which we suppose ourselves glancing, is a thing altogether apart:—still, for the moment, let us imagine it placed upon our Sun, centre over centre, as we just now imagined this Sun itself placed upon the Earth. Let us now conceive the particular star we have in mind, extending, in every direction, beyond the orbit of Mercury—of Venus—of the Earth:—still *on*, beyond the orbit of Mars—of Jupiter—of Uranus—until, finally, we fancy it filling the circle—*seventeen billions of miles in circumference*—which is described by the revolution of Leverrier's planet. When we have conceived all this, we shall have entertained no extravagant conception. There is the very best reason for believing that many of the stars are even far larger than the one we have imagined. I mean to say, that we have the very best *empirical* basis for such belief—and, in looking back at the original, atomic arrangements for *diversity*, which have been assumed as a part of the Divine plan in the constitution of the Universe, we shall be enabled easily to understand and to credit the existence of even far vaster disproportions in stellar size than any to which I have hitherto alluded. The largest orbs of course we must expect to find rolling through the widest vacancies of Space.

I remarked, just now, that to convey an idea of the interval between our Sun and any one of the other stars, we should require the eloquence of an archangel. In so saying, I should not be accused of exaggeration; for, in simple truth, these are topics on which it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. But let us bring the matter more distinctly before the eye of the mind.

In the first place, we may get a general, *relative* conception of the interval referred to by comparing it with the inter-planetary spaces. If, for example, we suppose the Earth, which is in reality 95 millions of miles from the Sun, to be only *one foot* from that luminary, then Neptune

would be forty feet distant, *and the star Alpha Lyræ, at the very least, one hundred and fifty-nine.*

Now I presume that, in the termination of my last sentence, few of my readers have noticed anything especially objectionable—particularly wrong. I said that the distance of the Earth from the Sun being taken at *one foot*, the distance of Neptune would be forty feet, and that of Alpha Lyræ one hundred and fifty-nine. The proportion between one foot and one hundred and fifty nine has appeared, perhaps, to convey a sufficiently definite impression of the proportion between the two intervals—that of the Earth from the Sun, and that of Alpha Lyræ from the same luminary. But my account of the matter should in reality have run thus:—The distance of the Earth from the Sun being taken at one foot, the distance of Neptune would be forty feet, and that of Alpha Lyræ one hundred and fifty-nine—*miles*:—that is to say, I had assigned to Alpha Lyræ, in my first statement of the case, only the 5280*th part* of that distance which is the *least distance possible* at which it can actually lie.

To proceed:—However distant a mere *planet* is, yet when we look at it through a telescope, we see it under a certain form—of a certain appreciable size. Now I have already hinted at the probable bulk of many of the stars; nevertheless, when we view any one of them, even through the most powerful telescope, it is found to present us with *no form*, and consequently with *no magnitude* whatever. We see it as a point, and nothing more.

Again:—Let us suppose ourselves walking at night on a highway. In a field on one side of the road is a line of tall objects, say trees, the figures of which are distinctly defined against the background of the sky. This line of objects extends at right angles to the road, and from the road to the horizon. Now, as we proceed along the road, we see these objects changing their positions, respectively, in relation to a certain fixed point in that portion of the firmament which forms the background of the view. Let us suppose this fixed point—sufficiently fixed for our purpose—to be the rising moon. We become aware, at once, that while the tree nearest us so far alters its position in

respect to the moon, as to seem flying behind us, the tree in the extreme distance has scarcely changed at all its relative position with the satellite. We then go on to perceive that the farther the objects are from us, the less they alter their positions; and the converse. Then we begin, unwittingly, to estimate the distances of individual trees by the degrees in which they evince the relative alteration. Finally, we come to understand how it might be possible to ascertain the actual distance of any given tree in the line, by using the amount of relative alteration as a basis in a simple geometrical problem. Now, this relative alteration is what we call "parallax;" and by parallax we calculate the distances of the heavenly bodies. Applying the principle to the trees in question, we should of course be very much at a loss to comprehend the distance of *that* tree, which, however far we proceeded along the road, should evince *no* parallax at all. This in the case described is a thing impossible; but impossible only because all distances on our Earth are trivial indeed:—in comparison with the vast cosmical quantities, we may speak of them as absolutely nothing.

Now, let us suppose the star Alpha Lyræ directly overhead; and let us imagine that, instead of standing on the Earth, we stand at one end of a straight road stretching through Space to a distance equalling the diameter of the Earth's orbit—that is to say, to a distance of *one hundred and ninety millions of miles.* Having observed, by means of the most delicate micrometrical instruments, the exact position of the star, let us now pass along this inconceivable road, until we reach the other extremity. Now, once again, let us look at the star. It is *precisely* where we left it. Our instruments, however delicate, assure us that its relative position is absolutely—is identically the same, as at the commencement of our unutterable journey. *No* parallax —none whatever—has been found.

The fact is that, in regard to the distance of the fixed stars—of any one of the myriads of suns glistening on the farther side of that awful chasm which separates our system from its brothers in the cluster to which it belongs—astronomical science, until very lately, could speak only with a

negative certainty. Assuming the brightest as the nearest, we could say, even of *them*, only that there is a certain incomprehensible distance on the *hither* side of which they cannot be :—how far they are beyond it we had in no case been able to ascertain. We perceived, for example, that Alpha Lyræ cannot be nearer to us than 19 trillions, 200 billions of miles ; but, for all we knew, and indeed for all we now know, it may be distant from us the square, or the cube, or any other power of the number mentioned. By dint, however, of wonderfully minute and cautious observations, continued with novel instruments, for many laborious years, Bessel, not long ago deceased, has lately succeeded in determining the distance of six or seven stars ; among others, that of the star numbered 61 in the constellation of the Swan. The distance in this latter instance ascertained is 670,000 times that of the Sun ; which last, it will be remembered, is 95 millions of miles. The star 61 Cygni, then, is nearly 64 trillions of miles from us—or more than three times the distance assigned *as the least possible*, for Alpha Lyræ.

In attempting to appreciate this interval by the aid of any considerations of *velocity*, as we did in endeavouring to estimate the distance of the moon, we must leave out of sight altogether such nothings as the speed of a cannon ball, or of sound. Light, however, according to the latest calculations of Struve, proceeds at the rate of 167,000 miles in a second. Thought itself cannot pass through this interval more speedily—if, indeed, thought can traverse it at all. Yet, in coming from 61 Cygni to us, even at this inconceivable rate, light occupies more than *ten years ;* and, consequently, were the star this moment blotted out from the Universe, still, *for ten years*, would it continue to sparkle on, undimmed in its paradoxical glory.

Keeping now in mind whatever feeble conception we may have attained of the interval between our Sun and 61 Cygni, let us remember that this interval, however unutterably vast, we are permitted to consider as but the *average* interval among the countless host of stars composing that cluster, or "nebula," to which our system, as well as that of

61 Cygni, belongs. I have, in fact, stated the case with great moderation. We have excellent reason for believing 61 Cygni to be one of the *nearest* stars, and thus for concluding, at least for the present, that its distance from us is *less* than the average distance between star and star in the magnificent cluster of the Milky Way.

And here, once again and finally, it seems proper to suggest that even as yet we have been speaking of trifles. Ceasing to wonder at the space between star and star in our own or in any particular cluster, let us rather turn our thoughts to the intervals between cluster and cluster in the all-comprehensive cluster of the Universe.

I have already said that light proceeds at the rate of 167,000 miles in a second—that is about 10 millions of miles in a minute, or about 600 millions of miles in an hour: —yet so far removed from us are some of the nebulæ, that even light, speeding with this velocity, could not and does not reach us, from those mysterious regions, in less than 3 *millions of years.* This calculation, moreover, is made by the elder Herschel, and in reference merely to those comparatively proximate clusters within the scope of his own telescope. There *are* nebulæ, however, which, through the magical tube of Lord Rosse, are this instant whispering in our ears the secrets of *a million of ages* by-gone. In a word, the events which we behold now—at this moment—in those worlds—are the identical events which interested their inhabitants *ten hundred thousand centuries ago.* In intervals—in distances such as this suggestion forces upon the *soul*—rather than upon the mind—we find at length a fitting climax to all hitherto frivolous considerations of *quantity.*

Our fancies thus occupied with the cosmical distances, let us take the opportunity of referring to the difficulty which we have so often experienced, while pursuing *the beaten path* of astronomical reflection *in accounting* for the immeasurable voids alluded to—in comprehending why chasms so totally unoccupied, and therefore apparently so needless, have been made to intervene between star and star —between cluster and cluster—in understanding, to be brief, a sufficient reason for the Titanic scale, in respect of

mere *Space*, on which the Universe is seen to be constructed. A rational cause for the phenomenon, I maintain that Astronomy has palpably failed to assign:—but the considerations through which, in this Essay, we have proceeded step by step, enable us clearly and immediately to perceive that *Space and Duration are one.* That the Universe might *endure* throughout an æra at all commensurate with the grandeur of its component material portions and with the high majesty of its spiritual purposes, it was necessary that the original atomic diffusion be made to so inconceivable an extent as to be only not infinite. It was required, in a word, that the stars should be gathered into visibility from invisible nebulosity—proceed from nebulosity to consolidation—and so grow grey in giving birth and death to unspeakably numerous and complex variations of vitalic development:—it was required that the stars should do all this—should have time thoroughly to accomplish all these Divine purposes—*during the period* in which all things were effecting their return into Unity with a velocity accumulating in the inverse proportion of the squares of the distances at which lay the inevitable End.

Throughout all this we have no difficulty in understanding the absolute accuracy of the Divine *adaptation.* The density of the stars, respectively, proceeds of course as their condensation diminishes; condensation and heterogeneity keep pace with each other, through the latter, which is the index of the former, we estimate the vitalic and spiritual development. Thus in the density of the globes, we have the measure in which their purposes are fulfilled. *As* density proceeds—*as* the divine intentions *are* accomplished—*as* less and still less remains *to be* accomplished—so, in the same ratio, should we expect to find an acceleration of *the End*:—and thus the philosophical mind will easily comprehend that the Divine designs in constituting the stars advance *mathematically* to their fulfilment; and more, it will readily give the advance a mathematical expression; it will decide that this advance is inversely proportional to the squares of the distances of all created things from the starting-point and goal of their creation.

Not only is this Divine adaptation, however, mathematically accurate, but there is that about it which stamps it *as divine*, in distinction from that which is merely the work of human constructiveness. I allude to the complete *mutuality* of adaptation. For example: in human constructions a particular cause has a particular effect; a particular intention brings to pass a particular object; but this is all; we see no reciprocity. The effect does not re-act upon the cause; the intention does not change relations with the object. In Divine constructions, the object is either design or object as we choose to regard it—and we may take at any time a cause for an effect, or the converse—so that we can never absolutely decide which is which.

To give an instance:—In polar climates the human frame, to maintain its animal heat, requires for combustion in the capillary system an abundant supply of highly azotised food, such as train-oil. But again:—in polar climates nearly the sole food afforded man is the oil of abundant seals and whales. Now, whether is oil at hand because imperatively demanded, or the only thing demanded because the only thing to be obtained? It is impossible to decide. There is an absolute *reciprocity of adaptation.*

The pleasure which we derive from any display of human ingenuity is in the ratio of *the approach* to this species of reciprocity. In the construction of *plot*, for example, in fictitious literature, we should aim at so arranging the incidents that we shall not be able to determine, of any one of them, whether it depends from any one other or upholds it. In this sense, of course, *perfection of plot* is really or practically unattainable—but only because it is a finite intelligence that constructs. The plots of God are perfect. The Universe is a plot of God.

And now we have reached a point at which the intellect is forced, again, to struggle against its propensity for analogical inference—against its monomaniac grasping at the infinite. Moons have been seen *revolving* about planets; planets about stars; and the poetical instinct of humanity —its instinct of the symmetrical, if the symmetry be but a symmetry of surface;—this *instinct*, which the Soul, not only

of Man but of all created beings, took up in the beginning from the *geometrical* basis of the Universal irradiation—impels us to the fancy of an endless extension of this system of *cycles*. Closing our eyes equally to *de*duction and *in*duction, we insist upon imagining a *revolution* of all the orbs of the Galaxy about some gigantic globe which we take to be the central pivot of the whole. Each cluster in the great cluster of clusters is imagined of course to be similarly supplied and constructed; while, that the "analogy" may be wanting at no point, we go on to conceive these clusters themselves, again, *as revolving* about some still more august sphere;—this latter, still again, *with* its encircling clusters, as but one of a yet more magnificent series of agglomerations, *gyrating* about yet another orb central *to them*—some orb still more unspeakably sublime—some orb, let us rather say, of infinite sublimity endlessly multiplied by the infinitely sublime. Such are the conditions, continued in perpetuity, which the voice of what some people term "analogy" calls upon the Fancy to depict and the Reason to contemplate, if possible, without becoming dissatisfied with the picture. Such, in *general*, is the interminable gyration beyond gyration which we have been instructed by Philosophy to comprehend and to account for, at least in the best manner we can. Now and then, however, a philosopher proper—one whose frenzy takes a very determinate turn—whose genius, to speak more reverentially, has a strongly-pronounced washerwomanish bias, doing everything up by the dozen—enables us to see *precisely* that point out of sight, at which the revolutionary processes in question do, and of right ought to, come to an end.

It is hardly worth while, perhaps, even to sneer at the reveries of Fourier:—but much has been said latterly of the hypothesis of Mädler—that there exists in the centre of the Galaxy a stupendous globe about which all the systems of the cluster revolve. The *period* of our own, indeed, has been stated—117 millions of years.

That our Sun has a motion in space, independently of its rotation and its revolution about the system's centre of gravity, has long been suspected. This motion, granting it

to exist, would be manifested perspectively. The stars in that firmamental region which we were leaving behind us, would, in a very long series of years, become crowded; those in the opposite quarter, scattered. Now, by means of astronomical History, we ascertain, cloudily, that some such phenomena have occurred. On this ground it has been declared that our system is moving to a point in the heavens diametrically opposite the star Zeta Herculis;—but this inference is, perhaps, the maximum to which we have any logical right. Mädler, however, has gone so far as to designate a particular star, Alcyone in the Pleiades, as being at or about the very spot around which a general *revolution* is performed.

Now, since by "analogy" we are led, in the first instance, to these dreams, it is no more than proper that we should abide by analogy, at least in some measure, during their development; and that analogy which suggests the revolution, suggests at the same time a central orb about which it should be performed:—so far the astronomer was consistent. This central orb, however, should, dynamically, be greater than all the orbs taken together which surround it. Of these there are about 100 millions. "Why, then," it was of course demanded, "do we not *see* this vast central sun—*at least equal* in mass to 100 millions of such suns as ours—why do we not *see* it—*we*, especially, who occupy the mid region of the cluster—the very locality *near* which, at all events, must be situated this incomparable star?" The reply was ready—"It must be non-luminous, as are our planets." Here, then, to suit a purpose, analogy is suddenly let fall. "Not so," it may be said; "we know that non-luminous suns actually exist." It is true that we have reason at least for supposing so; but we have certainly no reason whatever for supposing that the non-luminous suns in question are encircled by *luminous* suns, while these again are surrounded by non-luminous planets:—and it is precisely all this with which Mädler is called upon to find anything analogous in the heavens—for it is precisely all this which he imagines in the case of the Galaxy. Admitting the thing to be so, we cannot help here picturing to ourselves

how sad a puzzle the *why is it so* must prove to all *a priori* philosophers.

But granting, in the very teeth of analogy and of everything else, the non-luminosity of the vast central orb, we may still inquire how this orb, so enormous, could fail of being rendered visible by the flood of light thrown upon it from the 100 millions of glorious suns glaring in all directions about it. Upon the urging of this question, the idea of an actually solid central sun appears in some measure to have been abandoned; and speculation proceeded to assert that the systems of the cluster perform their revolutions merely about an immaterial centre of gravity common to all. Here, again then, to suit a purpose, analogy is let fall. The planets of our system revolve, it is true, about a common centre of gravity; but they do this in connection with, and in consequence of, a material sun whose mass more than counterbalances the rest of the system.

The mathematical circle is a curve composed of an infinity of straight lines. But this idea of the circle—an idea which, in view of all ordinary geometry, is merely the mathematical, as contradistinguished from the practical, idea—is, in sober fact, the *practical* conception which alone we have any right to entertain in regard to the majestic circle with which we have to deal, at least in fancy, when we suppose our system revolving about a point in the centre of the Galaxy. Let the most vigorous of human imaginations attempt but to take a single step towards the comprehension of a sweep so ineffable! It would scarcely be paradoxical to say that a flash of lightning itself, travelling *for ever* upon the circumference of this unutterable circle, would still, *for ever*, be travelling in a straight line. That the path of our Sun in such an orbit would, to any human perception, deviate in the slightest degree from a straight line, even in a million of years, is a proposition not to be entertained; yet we are required to believe that a curvature has become apparent during the brief period of our astronomical history—during a mere point—during the utter nothingness of two or three thousand years.

It may be said that Mädler *has* really ascertained a

curvature in the direction of our system's now well-established progress through Space. Admitting, if necessary, this fact to be in reality such, I maintain that nothing is thereby shown except the reality of this fact—the fact of a curvature. For its *thorough* determination, ages will be required; and, when determined, it will be found indicative of some binary or other multiple relation between our Sun and some one or more of the proximate stars. I hazard nothing, however, in predicting that, after the lapse of many centuries, all efforts at determining the path of our Sun through Space will be abandoned as fruitless. This is easily conceivable when we look at the infinity of perturbation it must experience from its perpetually-shifting relations with other orbs, in the common approach of all to the nucleus of the Galaxy.

But in examining other nebulæ than that of the Milky Way—in surveying, generally, the clusters which overspread the heavens—do we or do we not find confirmation of Mädler's hypothesis? We do *not*. The forms of the clusters are exceedingly diverse when casually viewed; but on close inspection, through powerful telescopes, we recognise the sphere very distinctly as at least the proximate form of all—their constitution in general being at variance with the idea of revolution about a common centre.

"It is difficult," says Sir John Herschel, "to form any conception of the dynamical state of such systems. On one hand, without a rotary motion and a centrifugal force, it is hardly possible not to regard them as in a state of *progressive collapse*. On the other, granting such a motion and such a force, we find it no less difficult to reconcile their forms with the rotation of the whole system [meaning cluster] around any single axis, without which internal collision would appear to be inevitable."

Some remarks lately made about the nebulæ by Dr. Nichol, in taking quite a different view of the cosmical conditions from any taken in this Discourse—have a very peculiar applicability to the point now at issue. He says:

"When our greatest telescopes are brought to bear upon them, we find that those which were thought to be irregular,

are not so; they approach nearer to a globe. Here is one that looked oval; but Lord Rosse's telescope brought it into a circle. . . . Now there occurs a very remarkable circumstance in reference to these comparatively sweeping circular masses of nebulæ. We find they are not entirely circular, but the reverse; and that all around them, on every side, there are volumes of stars, *stretching out apparently as if they were rushing towards a great central mass in consequence of the action of some great power.*" *

Were I to describe, in my own words, what must necessarily be the existing condition of each nebula on the hypothesis that all matter is, as I suggest, now returning to its original Unity, I should simply be going over, nearly verbatim, the language here employed by Dr. Nichol, without the faintest suspicion of that stupendous truth which is the key to these nebular phenomena.

And here let me fortify my position still farther, by the voice of a greater than Mädler—of one, moreover, to whom all the data of Mädler have long been familiar things, carefully and thoroughly considered. Referring to the elaborate calculations of Argelander—the very researches which form Mädler's basis—*Humboldt*, whose generalising powers have never perhaps been equalled, has the following observation:

"When we regard the real, proper, or non-perspective motions of the stars, we find *many groups of them moving in opposite directions;* and the data as yet in hand render it not necessary at least to conceive that the systems composing the Milky Way, or the clusters generally composing the Universe, are revolving about any particular centre unknown, whether luminous or non-luminous. It is but Man's longing for a fundamental First Cause that impels both his intellect and fancy to the adoption of such an hypothesis." †

* I must be understood as denying, *especially*, only the *revolutionary* portion of Mädler's hypothesis. Of course, if no great central orb exists *now* in our cluster, such will exist hereafter. Whenever existing, it will be merely the *nucleus* of the consolidation.

† Betrachtet man die nicht perspectivischen eigenen Bewegungen der Sterne, so scheinen viele gruppenweise ihrer in Richtung entgegen-

The phenomenon here alluded to—that of "many groups moving in opposite directions"—is quite inexplicable by Mädler's idea; but arises, as a necessary consequence, from that which forms the basis of this Discourse. While the *merely general direction* of each atom—of each moon, planet, star, or cluster — would, on my hypothesis, be of course absolutely rectilinear, while the *general* path of all bodies would be a right line leading to the centre of all; it is clear, nevertheless, that this general rectilinearity would be compounded of what, with scarcely any exaggeration, we may term an infinity of particular curves—an infinity of local deviations from rectilinearity — the result of continuous differences of relative position among the multitudinous masses, as each proceeded on its own proper journey to the End.

I quoted just now from Sir John Herschel the following words, used in reference to the clusters:—"On one hand, without a rotary motion and a centrifugal force, it is hardly possible not to regard them as in a state of *progressive collapse*." The fact is, that in surveying the "nebulæ" with a telescope of high power, we shall find it quite impossible, having once conceived this idea of "collapse," not to gather, at all points, corroboration of the idea. A nucleus is always apparent in the direction of which the stars seem to be precipitating themselves; nor can these nuclei be mistaken for merely perspective phenomena — the clusters are *really* denser near the centre, sparser in the regions more remote from it. In a word, we see everything as we *should* see it were a collapse taking place; but, in general, it may be said of these clusters, that we can fairly entertain, while looking at them, the idea of *orbitual*

gesetzt; und die bisher gesammelten Thatsachen machen es auf's wenigste nicht nothwendig, anzunehmen, dass alle Theile unserer Sternenschicht oder gar der gesammten Sterneninseln, welche den Weltraum füllen, sich um einen grossen, unbekannten, leuchtenden oder dunkeln, Centralkörper bewegen. Das Streben nach den letzten und höchsten Grundursachen macht freilich die reflectirende Thätigkeit des Menschen, wie seine Phantasie, zu einer solchen Annahme geneigt.

movement about a centre, only by admitting the *possible* existence, in the distant domains of space, of dynamical laws with which *we* are unacquainted.

On the part of Herschel, however, there is evidently *a reluctance* to regard the nebulæ as in "a state of progressive collapse." But if facts—if even appearances justify the supposition of their being in this state, *why*, it may well be demanded, is he disinclined to admit it? Simply on account of a prejudice; merely because the supposition is at war with a pre-conceived and utterly baseless notion—that of the endlessness—that of the eternal stability of the Universe.

If the propositions of this Discourse are tenable, the "state of progressive collapse" is *precisely* that state in which alone we are warranted in considering All Things; and, with due humility, let me here confess that, for my part, I am at a loss to conceive how any *other* understanding of the existing condition of affairs could ever have made its way into the human brain. "The tendency to collapse" and "the attraction of gravitation," are convertible phrases. In using either, we speak of the reaction of the First Act. Never was necessity less obvious than that of supposing Matter imbued with an ineradicable *quality* forming part of its material nature—a quality or instinct *for ever* inseparable from it, and by dint of which inalienable principle every atom is *perpetually* impelled to seek its fellow-atom. Never was necessity less obvious than that of entertaining this unphilosophical idea. Going boldly behind the vulgar thought, we have to conceive, metaphysically, that the gravitating principle appertains to Matter *temporarily*—only while diffused—only while existing as Many instead of as One—appertains to it by virtue of its state of irradiation alone—appertains, in a word, altogether to its *condition*, and not in the slightest degree to *itself*. In this view, when the irradiation shall have returned into its source—when the reaction shall be completed—the gravitating principle will no longer exist. And, in fact, astronomers, without at any time reaching the idea here suggested, seem to have been approximating it, in the assertion that, "if there were

but one body in the universe, it would be impossible to understand how the principle Gravity could obtain;" that is to say, from a consideration of Matter as they find it, they reach a conclusion at which I deductively arrive. That so pregnant a suggestion as the one quoted should have been permitted to remain so long unfruitful is, nevertheless, a mystery which I find it difficult to fathom.

It is, perhaps, in no little degree, however, our propensity for the continuous—for the analogical—in the present case more particularly for the symmetrical—which has been leading us astray. And, in fact, the sense of the symmetrical is an instinct which may be depended upon with an almost blindfold reliance. It is the poetical essence of the Universe—*of the Universe* which, in the supremeness of its symmetry, is but the most sublime of poems. Now symmetry and consistency are convertible terms:—thus Poetry and Truth are one. A thing is consistent in the ratio of its truth—true in the ratio of its consistency. *A perfect consistency, I repeat, can be nothing but an absolute truth.* We may take it for granted, then, that Man cannot long or widely err if he suffer himself to be guided by his poetical, which I have maintained to be his truthful, in being his symmetrical, instinct. He must have a care, however, lest, in pursuing too heedlessly the superficial symmetry of forms and motions, he leave out of sight the really essential symmetry of the principles which determine and control them.

That the stellar bodies would finally be merged in one, that at last all would be drawn into the substance of *one stupendous central orb already existing*, is an idea which for some time past seems vaguely and indeterminately to have held possession of the fancy of mankind. It is an idea, in fact, which belongs to the class of the *excessively obvious*. It springs, instantly, from a superficial observation of the cyclic and seemingly *gyrating* or *vortical* movements of those individual portions of the Universe which come most immediately and most closely under our observation. There is not perhaps a human being of ordinary education and of average reflective capacity to whom, at some period, the

fancy in question has not occurred, as if spontaneously, or intuitively, and wearing all the character of a very profound and very original conception. This conception, however, so commonly entertained, has never, within my knowledge, arisen out of any abstract considerations; being, on the contrary, always suggested, as I say, by the vortical movements about centres, a reason for it also,—a *cause* for the ingathering of all the orbs into one, *imagined to be already existing*, was naturally sought in the same direction, among these cyclic movements themselves.

Thus it happened that on announcement of the gradual and perfectly regular decrease observed in the orbit of Encke's comet, at every successive revolution about our Sun, astronomers were nearly unanimous in the opinion that the cause in question was found—that a principle was discovered sufficient to account, physically, for that final, universal agglomeration which, I repeat, the analogical, symmetrical, or poetical instinct of man had pre-determined to understand as something more than a simple hypothesis.

This cause, this sufficient reason for the final ingathering, was declared to exist in an exceedingly rare but still material medium pervading space; which medium, by retarding in some degree the progress of the comet, perpetually weakened its tangential force, thus giving a predominance to the centripetal, which, of course, drew the comet nearer and nearer at each revolution, and would eventually precipitate it upon the Sun.

All this was strictly logical—admitting the medium or ether, but this ether was assumed most illogically, on the ground that no *other* mode than the one spoken of could be discovered of accounting for the observed decrease in the orbit of the comet:—as if from the fact that we could *discover* no other mode of accounting for it, it followed, in any respect, that no other mode of accounting for it existed. It is clear that innumerable causes might operate, in combination, to diminish the orbit, without even a possibility of our ever becoming acquainted with one of them. In the meantime, it has never been fairly shown, perhaps, why the retardation occasioned by the skirts of the Sun's atmosphere,

through which the comet passes at perihelion, is not enough to account for the phenomenon. That Encke's comet will be absorbed into the Sun is probable; that all the comets of the system will be absorbed is more than merely possible; but in such case the principle of absorption must be referred to eccentricity of orbit—to the close approximation to the Sun of the comets at their perihelia; and is a principal not affecting in any degree the ponderous *spheres* which are to be regarded as the true material constituents of the Universe. Touching comets in general, let me here suggest, in passing, that we cannot be far wrong in looking upon them as the *lightning-flashes of the cosmical Heaven.*

The idea of a retarding ether, and through it of a final agglomeration of all things, seemed at one time, however, to be confirmed by the observation of a positive decrease in the orbit of the solid moon. By reference to eclipses recorded 2500 years ago, it was found that the velocity of the satellite's revolution *then* was considerably less than it is *now;* that on the hypothesis that its motions in its orbit is uniformly in accordance with Kepler's law, and was accurately determined *then*, 2500 years ago, it is now in advance of the position it *should* occupy by nearly 9000 miles. The increase of velocity proved of course a diminution of orbit, and astronomers were fast yielding to a belief in an ether as the sole mode of accounting for the phenomenon when Lagrange came to the rescue. He showed that owing to the configurations of the spheroids the shorter axis of their ellipses are subject to variation in length; the longer axis being permanent; and that this variation is continuous and vibratory, so that every orbit is in a state of transition either from circle to ellipse or from ellipse to circle. In the case of the moon, where the shorter axis is *de*creasing, the orbit is passing from circle to ellipse, and consequently is *de*creasing too; but after a long series of ages the ultimate eccentricity will be attained, then the shorter axis will proceed to increase until the orbit becomes a circle, when the process of shortening will again take place, and so on for ever. In the case of the Earth the orbit is passing from ellipse to circle. The facts thus demonstrated

do away of course with all necessity for supposing an ether, and with all apprehension of the system's instability on the ether's account.

It will be remembered that I have myself assumed what we may term *an ether*. I have spoken of a subtle *influence* which we know to be ever in attendance upon matter, although becoming manifest only through matter's heterogeneity. To this *influence*, without daring to touch it at all in any effort at explaining its awful *nature*, I have referred the various phenomena of electricity, heat, light, magnetism, and more—of vitality, consciousness, and thought—in a word, of spirituality. It will be seen at once, then, that the ether thus conceived is radically distinct from the ether of the astronomers, inasmuch as theirs is *matter* and mine *not*.

With the idea of material ether seems, thus, to have departed altogether the thought of that universal agglomeration so long predetermined by the poetical fancy of mankind —an agglomeration in which a sound Philosophy might have been warranted in putting faith, at least to a certain extent, if for no other reason than that by this poetical fancy it *had* been so predetermined. But so far as Astronomy—so far as mere Physics have yet spoken, the cycles of the Universe has no conceivable end. Had an end been demonstrated, however, from so purely collateral a cause as an ether, Man's instinct of the Divine *capacity to adapt* would have rebelled against the demonstration. We should have been forced to regard the Universe with some such sense of dissatisfaction as we experience in contemplating an unnecessarily complex work of human art. Creation would have affected us as an imperfect *plot* in a romance, where the *dénoument* is awkwardly brought about by interposed incidents external and foreign to the main subject, instead of springing out of the bosom of the thesis, out of the heart of the ruling idea, instead of arising as a result of the primary proposition, as inseparable and inevitable part and parcel of the fundamental conception of the book.

What I mean by the symmetry of mere surface will now be more clearly understood. It is simply by the

blandishment of this symmetry that we have been beguiled into the general idea of which Mädler's hypothesis is but a part—the idea of the vortical indrawing of the orbs. Dismissing this nakedly physical conception, the symmetry of principle sees the end of all things metaphysically involved in the thought of a beginning; seeks and finds in this origin of all things the *rudiment* of this end; and perceives the impiety of supposing this end likely to be brought about less simply—less directly—less obviously—less artistically—than through *the reaction of the originating Act.*

Recurring, then, to a previous suggestion, let us understand the systems—let us understand each star with its attendant planets—as but a Titanic atom existing in space with precisely the same inclination for Unity which characterised, in the beginning, the actual atoms after their irradiation throughout the Universal sphere. As these original atoms rushed towards each other in generally straight lines, so let us conceive as at least generally rectilinear, the paths of the system-atoms towards their respective centres of aggregation:—and in this direct drawing together of the systems into clusters, with a similar and simultaneous drawing together of the clusters themselves while undergoing consolidation, we have at length attained the great *Now*—the awful Present—the Existing Condition of the Universe.

Of the still more awful Future a not irrational analogy may guide us in framing an hypothesis. The equilibrium between the centripetal and centrifugal forces of each system, being necessarily destroyed upon attainment of a certain proximity to the nucleus of the cluster to which it belongs, there must occur, at once, a chaotic or seemingly chaotic precipitation, of the moons upon the planets, of the planets upon the suns, and of the suns upon the nuclei; and the general result of this precipitation must be the gathering of the myriad now-existing stars of the firmament into an almost infinitely less number of almost infinitely superior spheres. In being immeasurably fewer, the worlds of that day will be immeasurably greater than our own. Then, indeed, amid unfathomable abysses, will be glaring unim-

aginable suns. But all this will be merely a climacic magnificence foreboding the great End. Of this End the new genesis described can be but a very partial postponement. While undergoing consolidation, the clusters themselves, with a speed prodigiously accumulative, have been rushing towards their own general centre—and now, with a thousand-fold electric velocity, commensurate only with their material grandeur and with the spiritual passion of their appetite for oneness, the majestic remnants of the tribe of Stars flash at length into a common embrace. The inevitable catastrophe is at hand.

But this catastrophe—what is it? We have seen accomplished the ingathering of the orbs. Henceforward, are we not to understand *one material globe of globes* as constituting and comprehending the Universe? Such a fancy would be altogether at war with every assumption and consideration of this Discourse.

I have already alluded to that absolute *reciprocity of adaptation* which is the idiosyncrasy of the divine Art—stamping it divine. Up to this point of our reflections, we have been regarding the electrical influence as a something by dint of whose repulsion alone Matter is enabled to exist in that state of diffusion demanded for the fulfilment of its purposes:—so far, in a word, we have been considering the influence in question as ordained for Matter's sake to subserve the objects of matter. With a perfectly legitimate reciprocity, we are now permitted to look at Matter, as created *solely for the sake of this influence*—solely to serve the objects of this spiritual Ether. Through the aid—by the means—through the agency of Matter, and by dint of its heterogeneity—is this Ether manifested—is *Spirit individualised.* It is merely in the development of this Ether, through heterogeneity, that particular masses of Matter become animate—sensitive—and in the ratio of their heterogeneity;—some reaching a degree of sensitiveness involving what we call *Thought*, and thus attaining Conscious Intelligence.

In this view, we are enabled to perceive Matter as a Means—not as an End. Its purposes are thus seen to have

been comprehended in its diffusion; and with the return into Unity these purposes cease. The absolutely consolidated globe of globes would be *objectless*—therefore not for a moment could it continue to exist. Matter, created for an end, would unquestionably, on fulfilment of that end, be Matter no longer. Let us endeavour to understand that it would disappear, and that God would remain all in all.

That every work of Divine conception must coexist and coexpire with its particular design, seems to me especially obvious; and I make no doubt that, on perceiving the final globe of globes to be *objectless*, the majority of my readers will be satisfied with my "*therefore* it cannot continue to exist." Nevertheless, as the startling thought of its instantaneous disappearance is one which the most powerful intellect cannot be expected readily to entertain on grounds so decidedly abstract, let us endeavour to look at the idea from some other and more ordinary point of view: let us see how thoroughly and beautifully it is corroborated in an *a posteriori* consideration of Matter as we actually find it.

I have before said that "Attraction and Repulsion being undeniably the sole properties by which Matter is manifested to Mind, we are justified in assuming that Matter *exists* only as Attraction and Repulsion—in other words, that Attraction and Repulsion *are* Matter; there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term Matter and the terms 'Attraction' and 'Repulsion' taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions of Logic."*

Now the very definition of Attraction implies particularity—the existence of parts, particles, or atoms; for we define it as the tendency of "each atom, etc., to every other atom," etc. according to a certain law. Of course where there are *no* parts—where there is absolute Unity—where the tendency to oneness is satisfied—there can be no Attraction:—this has been fully shown, and all philosophy admits it. When, on fulfilment of its purposes, then, Matter shall have returned into its original condition of

* Page 114.

One—a condition which presupposes the expulsion of the separative ether, whose province and whose capacity are limited to keeping the atoms apart until that great day when, this ether being no longer needed, the overwhelming pressure of the finally collective Attraction shall at length just sufficiently predominate and expel it:—when, I say, Matter, finally expelling the Ether, shall have returned into absolute Unity—it will then (to speak paradoxically for the moment) be Matter without Attraction and without Repulsion—in other words, Matter without Matter—in other words, again, *Matter no more.* In sinking into Unity, it will sink at once into that Nothingness which, to all Finite Perception, Unity must be—into that Material Nihility from which alone we can conceive it to have been evoked—to have been *created* by the Volition of God.

I repeat, then, let us endeavour to comprehend that the final globe of globes will instantaneously disappear, and that God will remain all in all.

But are we here to pause? Not so. On the Universal agglomeration and dissolution, we can readily conceive that a new and perhaps totally different series of conditions may ensue—another creation and irradiation, returning into itself—another action and reaction of the Divine Will. Guiding our imagination by that omniprevalent law of laws, the law of periodicity, are we not, indeed, more than justified in entertaining a belief—let us say, rather, in indulging a hope—that the processes we have here ventured to contemplate will be renewed for ever, and for ever, and for ever; a novel Universe swelling into existence, and then subsiding into nothingness, at every throb of the Heart Divine?

And now—this Heart Divine—what *is* it? *It is our own.*

Let not the merely seeming irreverence of this idea frighten our souls from that cool exercise of consciousness—from that deep tranquillity of self-inspection—through which alone we can hope to attain the presence of this, the most sublime of truths, and look it leisurely in the face.

The *phenomena* on which our conclusions must at this

point depend, are merely spiritual shadows, but not the less thoroughly substantial.

We walk about, amid the destinies of our world-existence, encompassed by dim but ever present *Memories* of a Destiny more vast—very distant in the by-gone time, and infinitely awful.

We live out a Youth peculiarly haunted by such dreams; yet never mistaking them for dreams. As Memories we *know* them. *During our Youth* the distinction is too clear to deceive us even for a moment.

So long as this Youth endures, the feeling *that we exist* is the most natural of all feelings. We understand it *thoroughly*. That there was a period at which we did *not* exist—or that it might so have happened that we never had existed at all—are the considerations, indeed, which *during this youth* we find difficulty in understanding. Why we should *not* exist is, *up to the epoch of our Manhood*, of all queries the most unanswerable. Existence—self-existence—existence from all Time and to all Eternity—seems, up to the epoch of Manhood, a normal and unquestionable condition:—*seems, because it is.*

But now comes the period at which a conventional World-Reason awakens us from the truth of our dream. Doubt, Surprise, and Incomprehensibility arrive at the same moment. They say:—"You live, and the time was when you lived not. You have been created. An Intelligence exists greater than your own; and it is only through this Intelligence you live at all." These things we struggle to comprehend and cannot—*cannot*, because these things, being untrue, are thus, of necessity, incomprehensible.

No thinking being lives who, at some luminous point of his life of thought, has not felt himself lost amid the surges of futile efforts at understanding or believing, that anything exists *greater than his own soul*. The utter impossibility of any one's soul feeling itself inferior to another; the intense, overwhelming dissatisfaction and rebellion at the thought; —these, with the omniprevalent aspirations at perfection, are but the spiritual, coincident with the material, struggles towards the original Unity—are, to my mind at least, a

species of proof far surpassing what Man terms demonstration, that no one soul *is* inferior to another—that nothing is, or can be, superior to any one soul—that each soul is, in part, its own God—its own Creator:—in a word, that God—the material *and* spiritual God—*now* exists solely in the diffused Matter and Spirit of the Universe; and that the regathering of this diffused Matter and Spirit will be but the reconstitution of the *purely* Spiritual and Individual God.

In this view, and in this view alone, we comprehend the riddles of Divine Injustice—of Inexorable Fate. In this view alone the existence of Evil becomes intelligible; but in this view it becomes more—it becomes endurable. Our souls no longer rebel at a *Sorrow* which we ourselves have imposed upon ourselves, in furtherance of our own purposes—with a view—if even with a futile view—to the extension of our own *Joy*.

I have spoken of *Memories* that haunt us during our youth. They sometimes pursue us even in our Manhood:—assume gradually less and less indefinite shapes:—now and then speak to us with low voices, saying:

"There was an epoch in the Night of Time, when a still-existent Being existed—one of an absolutely infinite number of similar Beings that people the absolutely infinite domains of the absolutely infinite space. It was not and is not in the power of this Being—any more than it is in your own—to extend, by actual increase, the joy of his Existence; but just as it *is* in your power to expand or to concentrate your pleasures (the absolute amount of happiness remaining always the same) so did and does a similar capability appertain to this Divine Being, who thus passes his Eternity in perpetual variation of Concentrated Self and almost Infinite Self-Diffusion. What you call The Universe is but his present expansive existence. He now feels his life through an infinity of imperfect pleasures—the partial and pain-intertangled pleasures of those inconceivably numerous things which you designate as his creatures, but which are really but infinite individualisations of Himself. All these creatures—*all*—those which you term animate, as

well as those to whom you deny life for no better reason than that you do not behold it in operation—*all* these creatures have, in a greater or less degree, a capacity for pleasure and for pain :—*but the general sum of their sensations is precisely that amount of Happiness which appertains by right to the Divine Being when concentrated within Himself.* These creatures are all, too, more or less conscious Intelligences ; conscious, first, of a proper identity ; conscious, secondly, and by faint indeterminate glimpses, of an identity with the Divine Being of whom we speak—of an identity with God. Of the two classes of consciousness, fancy that the former will grow weaker, the latter stronger, during the long succession of ages which must elapse before these myriads of individual Intelligences become blended—when the bright stars become blended—into One. Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness—that Man, for example, ceasing imperceptibly to feel himself Man, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch when he shall recognise his existence as that of Jehovah. In the meantime bear in mind that all is Life—Life—Life within Life—the less within the greater, and all within the *Spirit Divine.*

ESSAYS.

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE.

In speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing very much at random the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fails—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in

reconciling the critical dictum that the "Paradise Lost" is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity—its totality of effect or impression—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again; omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned—that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the Iliad, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of Art. The modern epic is, of the suppositional ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem *were* popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd—yet we are indebted for it to the quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does*

impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even "The Columbiad." Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. *As yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollock by the pound—but what else are we to *infer* from their continual prating about "sustained effort?" If, by "sustained effort," any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort's account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of Art rather by the impression it makes—by the effect it produces—than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of "sustained effort" which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing and genius quite another—nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By-and-by, this proposition, with many which I have been just urging, will be received as self-evident. In the meantime, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring, but in general they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention, and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem, in keeping it out of the popular view, is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade:

> I arise from dreams of thee
> In the first sweet sleep of night

When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?—
To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O, beloved as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast:
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last!

Very few perhaps are familiar with these lines, yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all, but by none so thoroughly as by him who has himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis, the very best in my opinion which he has ever written, has no doubt, through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

The shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight-tide—
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walk'd she; but, viewlessly,
Walk'd spirits at her side.

Peace charm'd the street beneath her feet,
And Honour charm'd the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true—
Her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honour'd well are charms to sell,
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail—
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walk'd forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
From this world's peace to pray,
For as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in Heaven
By man is cursed alway!

In this composition we find it difficult to recognise the Willis who has written so many mere "verses of society." The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of energy, while they breathe an earnestness, an evident sincerity of sentiment, for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania—while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable—has for some years past been gradually dying out of the public mind by mere dint of its own absurdity, we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and

avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral, and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronised this happy idea, and we Bostonians very especially have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force: — but the simple fact is, that would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls, we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified, more supremely noble than this very poem, this poem *per se*, this poem which is a poem and nothing more, this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would nevertheless limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox to wreathe her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. *He* must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle because it is just this position which it occupies in the mind

It holds intimate relations with either extreme, but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless, we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful, while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms, waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity, her disproportion, her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious, in a word, to Beauty.

An immortal instinct deep within the spirit of man is thus plainly a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odours, and sentiments, amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colours, and odours, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odours, and colours, and sentiments, which greet *him* in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us, but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements perhaps appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry, or when by Music, the most

entrancing of the Poetic moods, we find ourselves melted into tears, we weep then, not as the Abbaté Gravina supposes, through excess of pleasure, but through a certain, petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and for ever, those divine and rapturous joys of which *through* the poem, or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and *to feel* as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develope itself in various modes—in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance—very especially in Music—and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that Music, in its various modes of metre, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected—is so vitally important an adjunct, that he is simply silly who declines its assistance, I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music perhaps that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty. It *may* be, indeed, that here this sublime end is, now and then, attained in *fact*. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which *cannot* have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess—and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate, then:—I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Con-

science, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation. *That* pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement *of the soul*, which we recognise as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore—using the word as inclusive of the sublime—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work:—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Proëm to Mr. Longfellow's "Waif:"

> The day is done, and the darkness
> Falls from the wings of Night,
> As a feather is wafted downward
> From an Eagle in his flight.
>
> I see the lights of the village
> Gleam through the rain and the mist,
> And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
> That my soul cannot resist;
>
> A feeling of sadness and longing,
> That is not akin to pain,

And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labour,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than—

——————The bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Down the corridors of Time.

The idea of the last quartrain is also very effective. The poem on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its metre, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This "ease" or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in appearance alone—as a point of really difficult attainment. But not so:—a natural manner is difficult only to him who should never meddle with it—to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that *the tone*, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt—and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author who, after the fashion of "The North American Review," should be upon *all* occasions merely "quiet," must necessarily upon *many* occasions, be simply silly, or stupid; and has no more right to be considered "easy" or "natural" than a Cockney exquisite, or than the sleeping Beauty in the wax-works.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles "June." I quote only a portion of it;

There, through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale, close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife-bee and humming bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,

Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound

I know, I know I should not see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their soften'd hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is—that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

The rhythmical flow here is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible even in a poem, so full of brilliancy and spirit as the "Health" of Edward Coote Pinkney:

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burden'd bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill'd this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—

Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name!

It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called "The North American Review." The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book: —whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out *all the chaff* for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics —but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially, may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly *put*, to become self-evident. It is *not* excellence if it require to be demonstrated as such: —and thus to point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are *not* merits altogether.

Among the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, is one whose distinguished character as a poem proper, seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to his lines beginning—"Come rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron.

There are two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the *all in all* of the divine passion of Love—a sentiment which, perhaps, has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words:

> Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
> Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here;
> Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
> And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.
>
> Oh! what was love made for, if 't is not the same
> Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame?
> I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart,
> I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.
>
> Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss,
> And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,—
> Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue,
> And shield thee, and save thee,—or perish there too!

It has been the fashion of late days to deny Moore Imagination, while granting him Fancy—a distinction originating with Coleridge—than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful *only*. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly—more weirdly *imaginative*, in the best sense, than the lines commencing—"I would I were by that dim lake"—which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest—and, speaking of Fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His "Fair Ines" had always for me an inexpressible charm:

> O saw ye not fair Ines?
> She's gone into the West,
> To dazzle when the sun is down,
> And rob the world of rest:

She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whisper'd thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners wav'd before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream
—If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—

Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blest one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

"The Haunted House," by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written, one of the *truest*, one of the most unexceptionable, one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal—imaginative. I regret that its length renders it unsuitable for the purposes of this lecture. In place of it, permit me to offer the universally appreciated "Bridge of Sighs."

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;—
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;

Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it,—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly;
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!
Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smooth, and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest,—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

The vigour of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves:

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;

Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine ;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me :
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun :
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that which I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all :

In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

Although the rhythm here is one of the most difficult the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler *theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-elevating idea that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while in his adversity he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson, although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived, I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and *think* him the noblest of poets, *not* because the impressions he produces are at *all* times the most profound—*not* because the poetical excitement which he induces is at *all* times the most intense—but because it is at all times the most ethereal—in other words, the most elevating and most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, "The Princess:"

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love.

Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavoured to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the soul*, quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart, or of that truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For in regard to passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary—Love—the true, the divine Eros—the Uranian as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus—is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth, if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience at once the true poetical effect, but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognises the ambrosia which nourishes his soul in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven, in the volutes of the flower, in the clustering of low shrubberies, in the waving of the grain-fields, in the slanting of tall eastern trees, in the blue distance of mountains, in the grouping of clouds, in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks, in the gleaming of silver rivers, in the repose of sequestered lakes, in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds, in the harp of Æolus, in the sighing of the night-wind, in the repining voice of the forest, in the surf that complains to the shore, in the fresh breath of the woods, in the scent of the violet, in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth, in the suggestive odour that comes to him at eventide from far-distant undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored.

He owns it in all noble thoughts, in all unworldly motives, in all holy impulses, in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman, in the grace of her step, in the lustre of her eye, in the melody of her voice, in her soft laughter, in her sigh, in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments, in her burning enthusiasms, in her gentle charities, in her meek and devotional endurances; but above all, ah, far above all, he kneels to it, he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty of her *love.*

Let me conclude by the recitation of yet another brief poem, one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell, and is called "The Song of the Cavalier." With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathise with the sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real excellence of the poem. To do this fully we must identify ourselves in fancy with the soul of the old cavalier.

A steed! a steed! of matchless speede!
A sword of metal keene!
Al else to noble heartes is drosse—
Al else on earth is meane.
The neighynge of the war-horse prowde,
The rowleing of the drum,
The clangour of the trumpet lowde—
Be soundes from heaven that come.
And oh! the thundering presse of knightes,
When as their war-cryes swelle,
May tole from heaven an angel bright,
And rowse a fiend from hell.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all,
And don your helmes amaine:
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honour, call
Us to the field againe.
No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—

Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
For the fayrest of the land;
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

THE RATIONALE OF VERSE.

THE word "Verse" is here used not in its strict or primitive sense, but as the term most convenient for expressing generally and without pedantry all that is involved in the consideration of rhythm, rhyme, metre, and versification.

There is, perhaps, no topic in polite literature which has been more pertinaciously discussed, and there is certainly not one about which so much inaccuracy, confusion, misconception, misrepresentation, mystification, and downright ignorance on all sides, can be fairly said to exist. Were the topic really difficult, or did it lie, even, in the cloud-land of metaphysics, where the doubt-vapours may be made to assume any and every shape at the will or at the fancy of the gazer, we should have less reason to wonder at all this contradiction and perplexity; but in fact the subject is exceedingly simple; one-tenth of it, possibly, may be called ethical; nine-tenths, however, appertain to mathematics; and the whole is included within the limits of the commonest common sense.

"But, if this is the case, how," it will be asked, "can so much misunderstanding have arisen? Is it conceivable that a thousand profound scholars, investigating so very simple a matter for centuries, have not been able to place it in the fullest light, at least, of which it is susceptible?" These queries, I confess, are not easily answered:—at all events, a satisfactory reply to them might cost more trouble than would, if properly considered, the whole *vexata quæstio* to which they have reference. Nevertheless, there is little

difficulty or danger in suggesting that the "thousand profound scholars" *may* have failed, first, because they were scholars, secondly, because they were profound, and thirdly, because they were a thousand — the impotency of the scholarship and profundity having been thus multiplied a thousand fold. I am serious in these suggestions; for, first again, there is something in "scholarship" which seduces us into blind worship of Bacon's Idol of the Theatre—into irrational deference to antiquity; secondly, the proper "profundity" is rarely profound — it is the nature of Truth in general, as of some ores in particular, to be richest when most superficial; thirdly, the clearest subject may be overclouded by mere superabundance of talk. In chemistry, the best way of separating two bodies is to add a third; in speculation, fact often agrees with fact and argument with argument, until an additional well-meaning fact or argument sets everything by the ears. In one case out of a hundred a point is excessively discussed because it is obscure; in the ninety-nine remaining it is obscure because excessively discussed. When a topic is thus circumstanced, the readiest mode of investigating it is to forget that any previous investigation has been attempted.

But, in fact, while much has been written on the Greek and Latin rhythms, and even on the Hebrew, little effort has been made at examining that of any of the modern tongues. As regards the English, comparatively nothing has been done. It may be said, indeed, that we are without a treatise on our own verse. In our ordinary grammars and in our works on rhetoric or prosody in general, may be found occasional chapters, it is true, which have the heading "Versification," but these are, in all instances, exceedingly meagre. They pretend to no analysis; they propose nothing like system; they make no attempt at even rule; everything depends upon "authority." They are confined, in fact, to mere exemplification of the supposed varieties of English feet and English lines—although in no work with which I am acquainted are these feet correctly given or these lines detailed in anything like their full extent. Yet what has been mentioned is all—if we except the occasional

introduction of some pedagogue-ism, such as this, borrowed from the Greek Prosodies: "When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable, it forms hypermeter." Now whether a line be termed catalectic or acatalectic is, perhaps, a point of no vital importance—it is even possible that the student may be able to decide, promptly, when the *a* should be employed and when omitted, yet be incognisant, at the same time, of *all* that is worth knowing in regard to the structure of verse.

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difficulty or danger in suggesting that the "thousand profound scholars" *may* have failed, first, because they were scholars, secondly, because they were profound, and thirdly, because they were a thousand — the impotency of the scholarship and profundity having been thus multiplied a thousand fold. I am serious in these suggestions; for, first again, there is something in "scholarship" which seduces us into blind worship of Bacon's Idol of the Theatre—into irrational deference to antiquity; secondly, the proper "profundity" is rarely profound — it is the nature of Truth in general, as of some ores in particular, to be richest when most superficial; thirdly, the clearest subject may be overclouded by mere superabundance of talk. In chemistry, the best way of separating two bodies is to add a third; in speculation, fact often agrees with fact and argument with argument, until an additional well-meaning fact or argument sets everything by the ears. In one case out of a hundred a point is excessively discussed because it is obscure; in the ninety-nine remaining it is obscure because excessively discussed. When a topic is thus circumstanced, the readiest mode of investigating it is to forget that any previous investigation has been attempted.

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versification which describes it as "the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length so as to produce harmony by the *regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity?*"

It may be urged, however, that our prosodist's *intention* was to speak of the English metres alone, and that, by omitting all mention of the spondee and pyrrhic, he has virtually avowed their exclusion from our rhythms. A grammarian is never excusable on the ground of good intentions. We demand from him, if from any one, rigorous precision of style. But grant the design. Let us admit that our author, following the example of all authors on English Prosody, has, in defining versification at large, intended a definition merely of the English. All these prosodists, we will say, reject the spondee and pyrrhic. Still all admit the iambus, which consists of a short syllable followed by a long; the trochee, which is the converse of the iambus; the dactyl, formed of one long syllable followed by two short; and the anapæst—two short succeeded by a long. The spondee is improperly rejected, as I shall presently show. The pyrrhic is rightfully dismissed. Its existence in either ancient or modern rhythm is purely chimerical, and the insisting on so perplexing a nonentity as a foot of *two short* syllables, affords, perhaps, the best evidence of the gross irrationality and subservience to authority which characterise our Prosody. In the meantime the acknowledged dactyl and anapæst are enough to sustain my proposition about the "alternation," etc., without reference to feet which are assumed to exist in the Greek and Latin metres alone—for an anapæst and a dactyl may meet in the same line, when of course we shall have an uninterrupted succession of four short syllables. The meeting of these two feet, to be sure, is an accident not contemplated in the definition now discussed; for this definition, in demanding a "regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity," insists on a regular succession of similar *feet*. But here is an example:

Sing tŏ mĕ | Ĭsăbēlle.

This is the opening line of a little ballad now before me, which proceeds in the same rhythm — a peculiarly beautiful one. More than all this: — English lines are often well composed, entirely, of a regular succession of syllables *all of the same quantity*: — the first lines, for instance, of the following quatrain by Arthur C. Coxe:

March! march! march!
Making sounds as they tread,
Ho! ho! how they step,
Going down to the dead!

The line italicised is formed of three cæsuras. The cæsura, of which I have much to say hereafter, is rejected by the English Prosodies, and grossly misrepresented in the classic. It is a perfect foot — the most important in all verse — and consists of a single *long* syllable; *but the length of this syllable varies.*

It has thus been made evident that there is *not one* point of the definition in question which does not involve an error; and for anything more satisfactory or more intelligible we shall look in vain to any published treatise on the topic.

So general and so total a failure can be referred only to radical misconception. In fact the English Prosodists have blindly followed the pedants. These latter, like *les moutons de Panurge*, have been occupied in incessant tumbling into ditches, for the excellent reason that their leaders have so tumbled before. The Iliad, being taken as a starting point, was made to stand instead of Nature and common sense. Upon this poem, in place of facts and deduction from fact, or from natural law, were built systems of feet, metres, rhythms, rules, — rules that contradict each other every five minutes, and for nearly all of which there may be found twice as many exceptions as examples. If any one has a fancy to be thoroughly confounded — to see how far the infatuation of what is termed "classical scholarship," can lead a bookworm in the manufacture of darkness out of sunshine, let him turn over for a few moments any of the German Greek Prosodies. The only

thing clearly made out in them is a very magnificent contempt for Liebnitz's principle of "a sufficient reason."

To divert attention from the real matter in hand by any further reference to these works is unnecessary, and would be weak. I cannot call to mind at this moment one essential particular of information that is to be gleaned from them, and I will drop them here with merely this one observation,—that, employing from among the numerous "*ancient*" feet the spondee, the trochee, the iambus, the anapæst, the dactyl, and the cæsura alone, I will engage to scan *correctly* any of the Horatian rhythms, or any true rhythm that human ingenuity can conceive. And this excess of chimerical feet is perhaps the very least of the scholastic supererogations. *Ex uno disce omnia.* The fact is that *Quantity* is a point in whose investigation the lumber of mere learning may be dispensed with, if ever in any. Its appreciation is universal. It appertains to no region, nor race, nor era in especial. To melody and to harmony the Greeks hearkened with ears precisely similar to those which we employ for similar purposes at present, and I should not be condemned for heresy in asserting that a pendulum at Athens would have vibrated much after the same fashion as does a pendulum in the city of Penn.

Verse originates in the human enjoyment of equality, fitness. To this enjoyment, also, all the moods of verse, rhythm, metre, stanza, rhyme, alliteration, the *refrain*, and other analogous effects, are to be referred. As there are some readers who habitually confound rhythm and metre, it may be as well here to say that the former concerns the *character* of feet (that is the arrangements of syllables) while the latter has to do with the *number* of these feet. Thus by "a dactylic *rhythm*" we express a sequence of dactyls. By "a dactylic hexa*meter*" we imply a line or measure consisting of six of these dactyls.

To return to *equality*. Its idea embraces those of similarity, proportion, identity, repetition, and adaptation or fitness. It might not be very difficult to go even behind the idea of equality, and show both how and why it is that the human nature takes pleasure in it, but such an

investigation would, for any purpose now in view, be supererogatory. It is sufficient that the *fact* is undeniable—the fact that man derives enjoyment from his perception of equality. Let us examine a crystal. We are at once interested by the equality between the sides and between the angles of one of its faces; the equality of the sides pleases us, that of the angles doubles the pleasure. On bringing to view a second face in all respects similar to the first, this pleasure seems to be squared; on bringing to view a third it appears to be cubed, and so on. I have no doubt, indeed, that the delight experienced, if measurable, would be found to have exact mathematical relations such as I suggest, that is to say, as far as a certain point, beyond which there would be a decrease in similar relations.

The perception of pleasure in the equality of *sounds* is the principle of *Music*. Unpractised ears can appreciate only simple equalities, such as are found in ballad airs. While comparing one simple sound with another they are too much occupied to be capable of comparing the equality subsisting between these two simple sounds taken conjointly, and two other similar simple sounds taken conjointly. Practised ears, on the other hand, appreciate both equalities at the same instant, although it is absurd to suppose that both are *heard* at the same instant. One is heard and appreciated from itself, the other is heard by the memory, and the instant glides into and is confounded with the secondary appreciation. Highly cultivated musical taste in this manner enjoys not only these double equalities, all appreciated at once, but takes pleasurable cognisance, through memory, of equalities the members of which occur at intervals so great that the uncultivated taste loses them altogether. That this latter can properly estimate or decide on the merits of what is called scientific music is of course impossible. But scientific music has no claim to intrinsic excellence, it is fit for scientific ears alone. In its excess it is the triumph of the *physique* over the *morale* of music. The sentiment is overwhelmed by the sense. On the whole, the advocates of the simpler melody and harmony have

infinitely the best of the argument, although there has been very little of real argument on the subject.

In *verse*, which cannot be better designated than as an inferior or less capable Music, there is, happily, little chance for complexity. Its rigidly simple character not even Science—not even Pedantry can greatly pervert.

The rudiment of verse may possibly be found in the *spondee*. The very germ of a thought seeking satisfaction in equality of sound, would result in the construction of words of two syllables, equally accented. In corroboration of this idea we find that spondees most abound in the most ancient tongues. The second step we can easily suppose to be the comparison, that is to say, the collocation of two spondees —of two words composed each of a spondee. The third step would be the juxtaposition of three of these words. By this time the perception of monotone would induce further consideration; and thus arises what Leigh Hunt so flounders in discussing under the title of "The *Principle* of Variety in Uniformity." Of course there is no principle in the case—nor in maintaining it. The "Uniformity" is the principle — the "Variety" is but the principle's natural safeguard from self-destruction by excess of self. "Uniformity," besides, is the very worst word that could have been chosen for the expression of the *general* idea at which it aims.

The perception of monotone having given rise to an attempt at its relief, the first thought in this new direction would be that of collating two or more words formed each of two syllables differently accented (that is to say, short and long) but having the same order in each word — in other terms, of collating two or more iambuses, or two or more trochees. And here let me pause to assert that more pitiable nonsense has been written on the topic of *long* and *short* syllables than on any other subject under the sun. In general, a syllable is long or short, just as it is difficult or easy of enunciation. The *natural* long syllables are those encumbered—the *natural* short syllables are those *un*encumbered, with consonants; all the rest is mere artificiality and jargon. The Latin Prosodies have a rule that "a vowel

before two consonants is long." This rule is deduced from "authority"—that is, from the observation that vowels so circumstanced, in the ancient poems, are always in syllables long by the laws of scansion. The philosophy of the rule is untouched, and lies simply in the physical difficulty of giving voice to such syllables—of performing the lingual evolutions necessary for their utterance. Of course, it is not the *vowel* that is long (although the rule says so), but the syllable of which the vowel is a part. It will be seen that the length of a syllable, depending on the facility or difficulty of its enunciation, must have great variation in various syllables; but for the purposes of verse we suppose a long syllable equal to two short ones, and the natural deviation from this relativeness we correct in perusal. The more closely our long syllables approach this relation with our short ones, the better, *ceteris paribus*, will be our verse: but if the relation does not exist of itself we force it by emphasis, which can, of course, make any syllable as long as desired;—or, by an effort we can pronounce with unnatural brevity a syllable that is naturally too long. *Accented* syllables are, of course, always long, but where *un*encumbered with consonants, must be classed among the *unnaturally* long. Mere custom has declared that we shall accent them—that is to say, dwell upon them; but no inevitable lingual difficulty forces us to do so. In fine, every long syllable must of its own accord occupy in its utterance, or must be *made* to occupy, precisely the time demanded for two short ones. The only exception to this rule is found in the cæsura—of which more anon.

The success of the experiment with the trochees or iambuses (the one would have suggested the other) must have led to a trial of dactyls or anapæsts—natural dactyls or anapæsts—dactylic or anapæstic *words*. And now some degree of complexity has been attained. There is an appreciation, first, of the equality between the several dactyls or anapæsts, and secondly, of that between the long syllable and the two short conjointly. But here it may be said, that step after step would have been taken, in continuation of this routine, until all the feet of the Greek Prosodies

became exhausted. Not so; these remaining feet have no existence except in the brains of the scholiasts. It is needless to imagine men inventing these things, and folly to explain how and why they invented them, until it shall be first shown that they are actually invented. All other "feet" than those which I have specified, are, if not impossible at first view, merely combinations of the specified; and, although this assertion is rigidly true, I will, to avoid misunderstanding, put it in a somewhat different shape. I will say, then, that at present I am aware of no *rhythm*—nor do I believe that any one can be constructed—which, in its last analysis, will not be found to consist altogether of the feet I have mentioned, either existing in their individual and obvious condition, or interwoven with each other in accordance with simple natural laws which I will endeavour to point out hereafter.

We have now gone so far as to suppose men constructing indefinite sequences of spondaic, iambic, trochaic, dactylic, or anapæstic words. In *extending* these sequences, they would be again arrested by the sense of monotone. A succession of spondees would *immediately* have displeased; one of iambuses or of trochees, on account of the variety included within the foot itself, would have taken longer to displease; one of dactyls or anapæsts, still longer; but even the last, if extended very far, must have become wearisome. The idea first of curtailing, and secondly of defining, the length of a sequence would thus at once have arisen. Here then is the *line* or verse proper.* The principle of equality being constantly at the bottom of the whole process, lines would naturally be made, in the first instance, equal in the number of their feet; in the second instance, there would be variation in the mere number; one line would be twice as long as another; then one would be some less obvious multiple of another; then still less obvious proportions

* Verse, from the Latin *vertere*, to turn, is so called on account of the turning or re-commencement of the series of feet. Thus a verse strictly speaking is a line. In this sense, however, I have preferred using the latter word alone; employing the former in the general acceptation given it in the heading of this paper.

would be adopted—nevertheless there would be *proportion*, that is to say, a phase of equality, still.

Lines being once introduced, the necessity of distinctly defining these lines *to the ear* (as yet written verse does not exist), would lead to a scrutiny of their capabilities *at their terminations*—and now would spring up the idea of equality in sound between the final syllables—in other words, of *rhyme*. First, it would be used only in the iambic, anapæstic, and spondaic rhythms (granting that the latter had not been thrown aside long since, on account of its tameness), because in these rhythms the concluding syllable being long, could best sustain the necessary protraction of the voice. No great while could elapse, however, before the effect, found pleasant as well as useful, would be applied to the two remaining rhythms. But as the chief force of rhyme must lie in the accented syllable, the attempt to create rhyme at all in these two remaining rhythms, the trochaic and dactylic, would necessarily result in double and triple rhymes, such as *beauty* with *duty* (trochaic), and *beautiful* with *dutiful* (dactylic).

It must be observed that in suggesting these processes I assign them no date; nor do I even insist upon their order. Rhyme is supposed to be of modern origin, and were this proved my positions remain untouched. I may say, however, in passing, that several instances of rhyme occur in the "Clouds" of Aristophanes, and that the Roman poets occasionally employ it. There is an effective species of ancient rhyming which has never descended to the moderns: that in which the ultimate and penultimate syllables rhyme with each other. For example:

Parturiunt montes; nascetur ridicu*lus mus*.

And again:

Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilici*bus sus*.

The terminations of Hebrew verse (as far as understood), show no signs of rhyme; but what thinking person can doubt that it did actually exist? That men have so obstinately and blindly insisted, *in general*, even up to the

present day in confining rhyme to the *ends* of lines, when its effect is even better applicable elsewhere, intimates in my opinion the sense of some *necessity* in the connection of the end with the rhyme—hints that the origin of rhyme lay in a necessity which connected it with the end—shows that neither mere accident nor mere fancy gave rise to the connection—points in a word, at the very necessity which I have suggested (that of some mode of defining lines *to the ear*), as the true origin of rhyme. Admit this and we throw the origin far back in the night of Time—beyond the origin of written verse.

But to resume. The amount of complexity I have now supposed to be attained is very considerable. Various systems of equalisation are appreciated at once (or nearly so) in their respective values and in the value of each system with reference to all the others. As our present *ultimatum* of complexity, we have arrived at triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines, existing proportionally as well as equally with regard to other triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines. For example:

> Virginal Lilian, rigidly, humblily dutiful;
> Saintlily, lowlily,
> Thrillingly, holily
> Beautiful!

Here we appreciate, first, the absolute equality between the long syllable of each dactyl and the two short conjointly; secondly, the absolute equality between each dactyl and any other dactyl, in other words, among all the dactyls; thirdly, the absolute equality between the two middle lines; fourthly, the absolute equality between the first line and the three others taken conjointly; fifthly, the absolute equality between the last two syllables of the respective words "dutiful" and "beautiful;" sixthly, the absolute equality between the two last syllables of the respective words "lowlily" and "holily;" seventhly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and the first syllable of "beautiful;" eighthly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "lowlily" and that of "holily;"

ninthly, the proportional equality (that of five to one) between the first line and each of its members, the dactyls; tenthly, the proportional equality (that of two to one) between each of the middle lines and its members, the dactyls; eleventhly, the proportional equality between the first line and each of the two middle, that of five to two; twelfthly, the proportional equality between the first line and the last, that of five to one; thirteenthly, the proportional equality between each of the middle lines and the last, that of two to one; lastly, the proportional equality, as concerns number, between all the lines, taken collectively and any individual line, that of four to one.

The consideration of this last equality would give birth immediately to the idea of *stanza*,* that is to say, the insulation of lines into equal or obviously proportional masses. In its primitive (which was also its best) form the stanza would most probably have had absolute unity. In other words, the removal of any one of its lines would have rendered it imperfect, as in the case above, where if the last line, for example, be taken away there is left no rhyme to the "dutiful" of the first. Modern stanza is excessively loose, and where so, ineffective as a matter of course.

Now, although in the deliberate written statement which I have here given of these various systems of equalities, there seems to be an infinity of complexity, so much that it is hard to conceive the mind taking cognisance of them all in the brief period occupied by the perusal or recital of the stanza, yet the difficulty is in fact apparent only when we will it to become so. Any one fond of mental experiment may satisfy himself, by trial, that in listening to the lines he does actually (although with a seeming unconsciousness, on account of the rapid evolutions of sensation) recognise and instantaneously appreciate (more or less intensely as his ear is cultivated) each and all of the equalisations detailed. The pleasure received or receivable has very much such progressive increase, and in very nearly

* A stanza is often vulgarly, and with gross impropriety, called a *verse*.

such mathematical relations as those which I have suggested in the case of the crystal.

It will be observed that I speak of merely a proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and that of "beautiful," and it may be asked why we cannot imagine the earliest rhymes to have had absolute instead of proximate equality of sound. But absolute equality would have involved the use of identical words, and it is the duplicate sameness or monotony, that of sense as well as that of sound, which would have caused these rhymes to be rejected in the very first instance.

The narrowness of the limits within which verse composed of natural feet alone must necessarily have been confined, would have led, after a *very* brief interval, to the trial and immediate adoption of artificial feet, that is to say, of feet *not* constituted each of a single word but two, or even three words, or of parts of words. These feet would be intermingled with natural ones. For example:

ă brēath | căn māke | thĕm ās | ă breāth | hăs māde.

This is an iambic line in which each iambus is formed of two words. Again:

Thĕ ūn | ĭmā | gĭnā | blĕ mīght | ŏf Jōve.

This is an iambic line in which the first foot is formed of a word and a part of a word; the second and third of parts taken from the body or interior of a word; the fourth of a part and a whole; the fifth of two complete words. There are no *natural* feet in either line. Again:

Cān ĭt bĕ | fāncĭĕd thăt | Dēĭtў | ēvĕr vĭn | dĭctĭvelў
Māde ĭn hĭs | ĭmăge ă | mānnĭkĭn | mērelў tŏ | mādděn ĭt!

These are two dactylic lines in which we find natural feet ("Deity," "mannikin"); feet composed of two words ("fancied that," "image a," "merely to," "madden it"); feet composed of three words ("can it be," "made in his"); a foot composed of a part of a word ("dictively"); and a foot composed of a word and a part of a word ("ever vin").

And now, in our suppositional progress, we have gone

so far as to exhaust all the *essentialities* of verse. What follows may, strictly speaking, be regarded as embellishment merely, but even in this embellishment the rudimental sense of *equality* would have been the never-ceasing impulse. It would, for example, be simply in seeking further administration to this sense that men would come in time to think of the *refrain* or burden, where, at the closes of the several stanzas of a poem, one word or phrase is *repeated;* and of alliteration, in whose simplest form a consonant is *repeated* in the commencements of various words. This effect would be extended so as to embrace repetitions both of vowels and of consonants in the bodies as well as in the beginnings of words, and at a later period would be made to infringe on the province of rhyme by the introduction of general similarity of sound between whole feet occurring in the body of a line—all of which modifications I have exemplified in the line above.

*M*ade in his i*m*age a *mannikin m*erely to *madden it.*

Further cultivation would improve also the *refrain* by relieving its monotone in slightly varying the phrase at each repetition, or (as I have attempted to do in "The Raven") in retaining the phrase and varying its application, although this latter point is not strictly a rhythmical effect *alone.* Finally, poets when fairly wearied with following precedent, following it the more closely the less they perceived it in company with Reason, would adventure so far as to indulge in positive rhyme at other points than the ends of lines. First, they would put it in the middle of the line, then at some point where the multiple would be less obvious, then, alarmed at their own audacity, they would undo all their work by cutting these lines in two. And here is the fruitful source of the infinity of "short metre" by which modern poetry, if not distinguished, is at least disgraced. It would require a high degree indeed both of cultivation and of courage on the part of any versifier to enable him to place his rhymes, and let them remain, at unquestionably their best position, that of unusual and *unanticipated* intervals.

On account of the stupidity of some people, or (if talent be a more respectable word), on account of their talent for misconception—I think it necessary to add here, first, that I believe the "processes" above detailed to be nearly if not accurately those which *did* occur in the gradual creation of what we now call verse; secondly, that, although I so believe, I yet urge neither the assumed fact nor my belief in it as a part of the true propositions of this paper; thirdly, that in regard to the aim of this paper, it is of no consequence whether these processes did occur either in the order I have assigned them, or at all; my design being simply, in presenting a general type of what such processes *might* have been and *must* have resembled, to help *them*, the "some people," to an easy understanding of what I have further to say on the topic of Verse.

There is one point which, in my summary of the processes, I have purposely forborne to touch; because this point, being the most important of all, on account of the immensity of error usually involved in its consideration, would have led me into a series of detail inconsistent with the object of a summary.

Every reader of verse must have observed how seldom it happens that even any one line proceeds uniformly with a succession, such as I have supposed, of absolutely equal feet; that is to say, with a succession of iambuses only, or of trochees only, or of dactyls only, or of anapæsts only, or of spondees only. Even in the most musical lines we find the succession interrupted. The iambic pentameters of Pope, for example, will be found on examination, frequently varied by trochees in the beginning, or by (what seem to be) anapæsts in the body of the line.

> ŏh thōu | whătē | vĕr tī | tlĕ pleāse | thĭne eār |
> Dĕan Drā | pĭĕr Bĭck | ĕrstāff | ŏr Gūll | ĭvēr |
> Whēthĕr | thŏu choōse | Cĕrvān | tĕs' sē | rĭoŭs āir |
> ŏr laūgh | ănd shāke | ĭn Rāb | ĕlaĭs eā | sў chaīr |

Were any one weak enough to refer to the Prosodies for the solution of the difficulty here, he would find it *solved* as usual by a *rule*, stating the fact (or what it, the rule, sup-

poses to be the fact), but without the slightest attempt at the *rationale*. "By a *synæresis* of the two short syllables," say the books, "an anapæst may sometimes be employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. . . . In the beginning of a line a trochee is often used for an iambus."

Blending is the plain English for *synæresis*—but there should be *no* blending; neither is an anapæst *ever* employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. These feet differ in time; and *no* feet so differing can ever be legitimately used in the same line. An anapæst is equal to four short syllables—an iambus only to three. Dactyls and trochees hold the same relation. The principle of *equality*, in verse, admits, it is true, of variation at certain points, for the relief of monotone, as I have already shown, but the point of *time* is that point which, being the rudimental one, must never be tampered with at all.

To explain:—In further efforts for the relief of monotone than those to which I have alluded in the summary, men soon came to see that there was no absolute necessity for adhering to the precise number of syllables, provided the time required for the whole foot was preserved inviolate. They saw, for instance, that in such a line as

ŏr lāugh | ănd shāke | ĭn Rāb | ĕlaĭs' ēa | sy chāir, |

the equalisation of the three syllables *elais ea* with the two syllables composing any of the other feet, could be readily effected by pronouncing the two syllables *elais* in double quick time. By pronouncing each of the syllables *e* and *lais* twice as rapidly as the syllable *sy*, or the syllable *in*, or any other short syllable, they could bring the two of them, taken together, to the length, that is to say to the time, of any one short syllable. This consideration enabled them to effect the agreeable variation of three syllables in place of the uniform two. And variation was the object—variation to the ear. What sense is there, then, in supposing this object rendered null by the *blending* of the two syllables so as to render them, in absolute effect, one? Of course, there must be *no* blending. Each syllable must be pronounced as distinctly as possible (or the variation is lost), but with

twice the rapidity in which the ordinary short syllable is enunciated. That the syllables *elais ca* do not compose an *anapæst* is evident, and the signs (ăăā) of their accentuation are erroneous. The foot might be written thus (u͡u͡ā) the inverted crescents expressing double quick time; and might be called a bastard iambus.

Here is a trochaic line:

Sēe thĕ | dēlĭcăte | fōotĕd | rēin-deĕr. |

The prosodies—that is to say the most considerate of them—would here decide that "*delicate*" is a dactyl used in place of a trochee, and would refer to what they call their "rule" for justification. Others, varying the stupidity, would insist upon a Procrustean adjustment thus (del'cate)—an adjustment recommended to all such words as *silvery*, *murmuring*, etc., which, it is said, should be not only pronounced, but written *silv'ry*, *murm'ring*, and so on, whenever they find themselves in trochaic predicament. I have only to say that "delicate," when circumstanced as above, is neither a dactyl nor a dactyl's equivalent; that I would suggest for it this (āu͡u͡) accentuation; that I think it as well to call it a bastard trochee; and that all words, at all events, should be written and pronounced *in full*, and as nearly as possible as nature intended them.

About eleven years ago, there appeared in "The American Monthly Magazine" (then edited, I believe, by Messrs. Hoffman and Benjamin,) a review of Mr. Willis's Poems; the critic putting forth his strength, or his weakness, in an endeavour to show that the poet was either absurdly affected, or grossly ignorant of the laws of verse; the accusation being based altogether on the fact that Mr. W. made occasional use of this very word "delicate," and other similar words, in "the Heroic measure, which every one knew consisted of feet of two syllables." Mr. W. has often, for example, such lines as

> That binds him to a woman's *delicate* love—
> In the gay sunshine, *reverent* in the storm—
> With its *invisible* fingers my loose hair.

Here, of course, the feet *licate love, verent* in and *sible fin,* are bastard iambuses; are *not* anapæsts: and are *not* improperly used. Their employment, on the contrary, by Mr. Willis, is but one of the innumerable instances he has given of keen sensibility in all those matters of taste which may be classed under the general head of *fanciful embellishment.*

It is also about eleven years ago, if I am not mistaken, since Mr. Horne (of England,) the author of "Orion," one of the noblest epics in any language, thought it necessary to preface his "Chaucer Modernised" by a very long and evidently a very elaborate essay, of which the greater portion was occupied in a discussion of the seemingly anomalous foot of which we have been speaking. Mr. Horne upholds Chaucer in its frequent use; maintains his superiority, *on account of* his so frequently using it, over all English versifiers; and indignantly repelling the common idea of those who make verse on their fingers—that the superfluous syllable is a roughness and an error—very chivalrously makes battle for it as a "grace." That a grace it is, there can be no doubt; and what I complain of is, that the author of the most happily versified long poem in existence, should have been under the necessity of discussing this grace merely *as* a grace, through forty or fifty vague pages, solely because of his inability to show *how* and *why* it is a grace—by which showing the question would have been settled in an instant.

About the trochee used for an iambus, as we see in the beginning of the line,

Whēthĕr thou choose Cervantes' serious air,

there is little that need be said. It brings me to the general proposition that, in all rhythms, the prevalent or distinctive feet may be varied at will, and nearly at random, by the *occasional* introduction of equivalent feet,—that is to say, feet the sum of whose syllabic times is equal to the sum of the syllabic times of the distinctive feet. Thus the trochee, *whēthĕr* is equal, in the sum of the times of its syllables, to the iambus, *thou choose,* in the sum of the

times of *its* syllables; each foot being in time, equal to three short syllables. Good versifiers who happen to be also good poets, contrive to relieve the monotony of a series of feet by the use of equivalent feet only at rare intervals, and at such points of their subject as seem in accordance with the *startling* character of the variation. Nothing of this care is seen in the line quoted above—although Pope has some fine instances of the duplicate effect. Where vehemence is to be strongly expressed, I am not sure that we should be wrong in venturing on *two consecutive* equivalent feet—although I cannot say that I have ever known the adventure made, except in the following passage, which occurs in "Al Aaraaf," a boyish poem written by myself when a boy. I am referring to the sudden and rapid advent of a star:—

> Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
> Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
> Whĕn fīrst thĕ phāntŏm's cōurse wăs fōund tŏ bē
> *Hēadlŏng hīthĕr*ward o'er the starry sea.

In the "general proposition" above, I speak of the *occasional* introduction of equivalent feet. It sometimes happens that unskilful versifiers, without knowing what they do, or why they do it, introduce so many "variations" as to exceed in number the "distinctive" feet, when the ear becomes at once balked by the *bouleversement* of the rhythm. Too many trochees, for example, inserted in an iambic rhythm would convert the latter to a trochaic. I may note here, that in all cases the rhythm designed should be commenced and continued, *without* variation, until the ear has had full time to comprehend what *is* the rhythm. In violation of a rule so obviously founded in common sense, many even of our best poets do not scruple to begin an iambic rhythm with a trochee, or the converse; or a dactylic with an anapæst, or the converse; and so on.

A somewhat less objectionable error, although still a decided one, is that of commencing a rhythm, not with a different equivalent foot, but with a "bastard" foot of the rhythm intended. For example:

Mānў ă | thoūght wĭll | cōme tŏ | mĕmŏrў. |

Here *many a* is what I have explained to be a bastard trochee, and to be understood should be accented with inverted crescents. It is objectionable solely on account of its position as the *opening* foot of a trochaic rhythm. *Memory*, similarly accented, is also a bastard trochee, but *un*objectionable, although by no means demanded.

The further illustration of this point will enable me to take an important step.

One of our finest poets, Mr. Christopher Pease Cranch, begins a very beautiful poem thus:

> Many are the thoughts that come to me
> In my lonely musing;
> And they drift so strange and swift
> There's no time for choosing
> Which to follow; for to leave
> Any, seems a losing.

"A losing" to Mr. Cranch, of course—but this *en passant*. It will be seen here that the intention is trochaic;—although we do *not* see this intention by the opening foot as we should do, or even by the opening line. Reading the whole stanza, however, we perceive the trochaic rhythm as the general design, and so after some reflection, we divide the first line thus:

Many are the | thōughts thăt | cōme tŏ | mē. |

Thus scanned, the line will seem musical. It *is*—highly so. And it is because there is no end to instances of just such lines of apparently incomprehensible music, that Coleridge thought proper to invent his nonsensical *system* of what he calls "scanning by accents"—as if "scanning by accents" were anything more than a phrase. Whenever "Christabel" is really *not rough*, it can be as readily scanned by the true *laws* (not the supposititious *rules*) of verse, as can the simplest pentameter of Pope; and where it *is* rough (*passim*) these same laws will enable any one of common sense to show *why* it is rough and to point out, instantaneously, the remedy for the roughness.

A reads and re-reads a certain line, and pronounces it false in rhythm—unmusical. *B*, however, reads it *to A*, and *A* is at once struck with the perfection of the rhythm, and wonders at his dulness in not "catching" it before. Henceforward he admits the line to be musical. *B*, triumphant, asserts that, to be sure the line is musical—for it is the work of Coleridge—and that it is *A* who is *not;* the fault being in *A's* false reading. Now here *A* is right and *B* wrong. *That* rhythm is erroneous (at some point or other more or less obvious), which *any* ordinary reader *can*, without design, read improperly. It is the business of the poet so to construct his line that the intention *must* be caught *at once*. Even when these men have precisely the same understanding of a sentence, they differ, and often widely, in their modes of enunciating it. Any one who has taken the trouble to examine the topic of emphasis (by which I here mean not *accent* of particular syllables, but the dwelling on entire words), must have seen that men emphasise in the most singularly arbitrary manner. There are certain large classes of people, for example, who persist in emphasising their monosyllables. Little uniformity of emphasis prevails; because the thing itself—the idea, emphasis—is referable to no natural—at least to no well comprehended and therefore uniform—law. Beyond a very narrow and vague limit, the whole matter is conventionality. And if we differ in emphasis even when we agree in comprehension, how much more so in the former when in the latter too! Apart, however, from the consideration of natural disagreement, is it not clear that, by tripping here and mouthing there, any sequence of words may be twisted into any species of rhythm? But are we thence to deduce that all sequences of words are rhythmical in a rational understanding of the term?—for this is the deduction precisely to which the *reductio ad absurdum* will, in the end, bring all the propositions of Coleridge. Out of a hundred readers of "Christabel," fifty will be able to make nothing of its rhythm, while forty-nine of the remaining fifty will, with some ado, fancy they comprehend it, after the fourth or fifth perusal. The one out of the whole hundred who shall both comprehend and admire it at first sight

—must be an unaccountably clever person—and I am by far too modest to assume, for a moment, that that very clever person is myself.

In illustration of what is here advanced I cannot do better than quote a poem:

> Pease porridge hot—pease porridge cold—
> Pease porridge in the pot—nine days old.

Now those of my readers who have never *heard* this poem pronounced according to the nursery conventionality, will find its rhythm as obscure as an explanatory note; while those who *have* heard it, will divide it thus, declare it musical, and wonder how there can be any doubt about it.

> Pease | porridge | hot | pease | porridge | cold |
> Pease | porridge | in the | pot | nine | days | old. |

The chief thing in the way of this species of rhythm, is the necessity which it imposes upon the poet of travelling in constant company with his compositions, so as to be ready at a moment's notice, to avail himself of a well-understood poetical license—that of reading aloud one's own doggerel.

In Mr. Cranch's line,

> Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me, |

the general error of which I speak is of course very partially exemplified, and the purpose for which, chiefly, I cite it, lies yet further on in our topic.

The two divisions (*thoughts that*) and (*come to*) are ordinary trochees. Of the last division (*me*) we will talk hereafter. The first division (many are the) would be thus accented by the Greek Prosodies (mānў ărе thĕ), and would be called by them ἀστρολογος. The Latin books would style the foot *Pæon Primus*, and both Greek and Latin would swear that it was composed of a trochee and what they term a pyrrhic—that is to say, a foot of two *short* syllables—a thing that *cannot be*, as I shall presently show.

But now, there is an obvious difficulty. The *astrologos*, according to the Prosodies' own showing, is equal to *five* short syllables, and the trochee to *three*—yet, in the line

quoted, these two feet are equal. They occupy *precisely* the same time. In fact, the whole music of the line depends upon their being *made* to occupy the same time. The Prosodies then, have demonstrated what all mathematicians have stupidly failed in demonstrating—that three and five are one and the same thing. After what I have already said, however, about the bastard trochee and the bastard iambus, no one can have any trouble in understanding that *many are the* is of similar character. It is merely a bolder variation than usual from the routine of trochees, and introduces to the bastard trochee one additional syllable. But this syllable is not *short*. That is, it is not short in the sense of "*short*" as applied to the final syllable of the ordinary trochee, where the word means merely *the half of long*.

In this case (that of the additional syllable) "short," if used at all, must be used in the sense of *the sixth of long*. And all the three final syllables can be called *short* only with the same understanding of the term. The three together are equal only to the one short syllable (whose place they supply) of the ordinary trochee. It follows that there is no sense in thus (˘) accenting these syllables. We must devise for them some new character which shall denote the sixth of long. Let it be (‹)—the crescent placed with the curve to the left. The whole foot (mānу are thĕ) might be called a *quick trochee*.

We now come to the final division (*me*) of Mr. Cranch's line. It is clear that this foot, short as it appears, is fully equal in time to each of the preceding. It is in fact the cæsura—the foot which, in the beginning of this paper, I called the most important in all verse. Its chief office is that of pause or termination; and here—at the end of a line—its use is easy, because there is no danger of misapprehending its value. We pause on it, by a seeming necessity, just so long as it has taken us to pronounce the preceding feet, whether iambuses, trochees, dactyls, or anapæsts. It is thus a *variable foot*, and, with some care, may be well introduced into the body of a line, as in a little poem of great beauty by Mrs. Welby:

I have | a lit | tle step | son | of on | ly three | years old. |

Here we dwell on the cæsura, *son*, just as long as it requires us to pronounce either of the preceding or succeeding iambuses. Its value, therefore, in this line, is that of three short syllables. In the following dactylic line its value is that of four short syllables.

Pale as a | lily was | Emily | Gray.

I have accented the cæsura with a (~~) by way of expressing this variability of value.

I observed just now that there could be no such foot as one of two short syllables. What we start from in the very beginning of all idea on the topic of verse, is quantity, *length*. Thus when we enunciate an independent syllable it is long, as a matter of course. If we enunciate two, dwelling on both equally, we express equality in the enumeration, or length, and have a right to call them two long syllables. If we dwell on one more than the other, we have also a right to call one short, because it is short in relation to the other. But if we dwell on both equally, and with a tripping voice, saying to ourselves here are two short syllables, the query might well be asked of us—"in relation to what are they short?" Shortness is but the negation of length. To say, then, that two syllables, placed independently of any other syllable, are short, is merely to say that they have no positive length, or enunciation—in other words, that they are no syllables—that they do not exist at all. And if, persisting, we add anything about their equality, we are merely floundering in the idea of an identical equation, where, x being equal to x, nothing is shown to be equal to zero. In a word, we can form no conception of a pyrrhic as of an independent foot. It is a mere chimera bred in the mad fancy of a pedant.

From what I have said about the equalisation of the several feet of a *line*, it must not be deduced that any *necessity* for equality in time exists between the rhythm of *several* lines. A poem, or even a stanza, may begin with iambuses in the first line, and proceed with anapæsts in the second, or even with the less accordant dactyls, as in the opening

of quite a pretty specimen of verse by Miss Mary A. S. Aldrich:

> The wa | ter li | ly sleeps | in pride |
> Dōwn ĭn thĕ | dēpths ŏf thĕ | āzūre | l͡a͡k͡e͡. |

Here *azure* is a spondee, equivalent to a dactyl; *lake* a cæsura.

I shall now best proceed in quoting the initial lines of Byron's "Bride of Abydos:"

> Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
> Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime—
> Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle
> Now melt into softness, now madden to crime?
> Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
> Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine,
> And the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
> Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in their bloom?
> Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit
> And the voice of the nightingale never is mute—
> Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
> And all save the spirit of man is divine?
> 'Tis the land of the East—'tis the clime of the Sun—
> Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
> Oh, wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
> Are the hearts that they bear and the tales that they tell.

Now the flow of these lines (as times go) is very sweet and musical. They have been often admired, and justly —as times go—that is to say, it is a rare thing to find better versification of its kind. And where verse is pleasant to the ear, it is silly to find fault with it because it refuses to be scanned. Yet I have heard men, professing to be scholars, who made no scruple of abusing these lines of Byron's on the ground that they were musical in spite of *all law*. Other gentlemen, *not* scholars, abused "all law" for the same reason—and it occurred neither to the one party nor to the other that the law about which they were disputing might possibly be no law at all—an ass of a law in the skin of a lion.

The Grammars said something about dactylic lines, and

it was easily seen that *these* lines were at least meant for dactylic. The first one was, therefore, thus divided:

Knŏw yĕ thĕ | lānd whĕre thĕ | cўprĕss ănd | mўrtlĕ. |

The concluding foot was a mystery; but the Prosodies said something about the dactylic "measure" calling now and then for a double rhyme; and the court of inquiry were content to rest in the double rhyme, without exactly perceiving what a double rhyme had to do with the question of an irregular foot. Quitting the first line, the second was thus scanned:

Āre ĕmblĕms | ōf deĕds thăt | āre dŏne ĭn | thēir clīme. |

It was immediately seen, however, that *this* would not do —it was at war with the whole emphasis of the reading. It could not be supposed that Byron, or any one in his senses, intended to place stress upon such monosyllables as "are," "of," and "their," nor could "their clime," collated with "to crime," in the corresponding line below, be fairly twisted into anything like a "double rhyme," so as to bring everything within the category of the Grammars. But further these Grammars spoke not. The inquirers, therefore, in spite of their sense of harmony in the lines, when considered without reference to scansion, fell back upon the idea that the "Are" was a blunder—an excess for which the poet should be sent to Coventry—and, striking it out, they scanned the remainder of the line as follows:

——ēmblĕms ŏf | deĕds thăt ăre | dōne ĭn thĕir clīme. |

This answered pretty well; but the Grammars admitted no such foot as a foot of one syllable; and besides the rhythm was dactylic. In despair, the books are well searched, however, and at last the investigators are gratified by a full solution of the riddle in the profound "Observation" quoted in the beginning of this article:—"When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable it forms hypermeter." This is enough. The anomalous line is pronounced to be catalectic at the

head and to form hypermeter at the tail—and so on, and so on; it being soon discovered that nearly all the remaining lines are in a similar predicament, and that what flows so smoothly to the ear, although so roughly to the eye, is, after all, a mere jumble of catalecticism, acatalecticism, and hypermeter—not to say worse.

Now, had this court of inquiry been in possession of even the shadow of the *philosophy* of Verse, they would have had no trouble in reconciling this oil and water of the eye and ear, by merely scanning the passage without reference to lines, and, continuously, thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle Are | emblems of | deeds that are | done in their | clime Where the | rage of the | vulture the | love of the | turtle Now | melt into | softness now | madden to | *crime* | Know ye the | land of the | cedar and | vine Where the | flowers ever | blossom the | beams ever | shine And the | light wings of | Zephyr op | pressed by per | *fume Wax* | faint o'er the | gardens of | Gul in their | bloom Where the | citron and | olive are | fairest of | fruit And the | voice of the | nightingale | never is | mute Where the | virgins are | soft as the | roses they | *twine And* | all save the | spirit of | man is di | vine 'Tis the | land of the | East 'tis the | clime of the | Sun Can he | smile on such | deeds as his | children have | *done Oh* | wild as the | accents of | lovers' fare | well Are the | hearts that they | bear and the | tales that they | *tell.*

Here "crime" and "tell" (italicised) are cæsuras, each having the value of a dactyl, four short syllables, while "fume Wax," "twine and," and "done Oh," are spondees which, of course, being composed of two long syllables are also equal to four short, and are the dactyl's natural equivalent. The nicety of Byron's ear has led him into a succession of feet which, with two trivial exceptions as regards melody, are absolutely accurate, a very rare occurrence this in dactylic or anapæstic rhythms. The exceptions are found in the spondee "*twine And*," and the dactyl, "*smile on such.*" Both feet are false in point of melody. In "*twine And*" to make out the rhyme we must force "*And*" into a length which it will not naturally bear. We are called on to sacrifice either the proper length of the syllable as demanded by its position as a member of a

spondee, or the customary accentuation of the word in conversation. There is no hesitation, and should be none. We at once give up the sound for the sense, and the rhythm is imperfect. In this instance it is *very* slightly so, not one person in ten thousand could by ear detect the inaccuracy. But the *perfection* of verse as regards melody, consists in its *never* demanding any such sacrifice as is here demanded. The rhythmical must agree *thoroughly* with the reading flow. This perfection has in no instance been attained, but is unquestionably attainable. "*Smile on such,*" the dactyl, is incorrect, because "*such,*" from the character of the two consonants *ch* cannot *easily* be enunciated in the ordinary time of a short syllable, which its position declares that it is. Almost every reader will be able to appreciate the slight difficulty here, and yet the error is by no means so important as that of the "*And*" in the spondee. By dexterity we *may* pronounce "*such*" in the true time, but the attempt to remedy the rhythmical deficiency of the *And* by drawing it out, merely aggravates the offence against natural enunciation by directing attention to the offence.

My main object, however, in quoting these lines is to show that in spite of the Prosodies, the length of a line is entirely an arbitrary matter. We might divide the commencement of Byron's poem thus :—

Know ye the | land where the |

or thus :

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and |

or thus :

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are |

or thus :

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are | emblems of. |

In short, we may give it any division we please, and the lines will be good, provided we have at least *two* feet in a line. As in mathematics two units are required to form

number, so rhythm (from the Greek ἀριθμος, number) demands for its formation at least two feet. Beyond doubt we often see such lines as

Know ye the—
Land where the—

lines of one foot, and our Prosodies admit such, but with impropriety, for common sense would dictate that every so obvious division of a poem as is made by a line, should include within itself all that is necessary for its own comprehension, but in a line of one foot we can have no appreciation of *rhythm*, which depends upon the equality between *two* or more pulsations. The false lines, consisting sometimes of a single cæsura, which are seen in mock Pindaric odes, are of course "rhythmical" only in connection with some other line, and it is this want of independent rhythm which adapts them to the purposes of burlesque alone. Their effect is that of incongruity (the principle of mirth), for they include the blankness of prose amid the harmony of verse.

My second object in quoting Byron's lines was that of showing how absurd it often is to cite a single line from amid the body of a poem for the purpose of instancing the perfection or imperfection of the line's rhythm. Were we to see by itself

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle,

we might justly condemn it as defective in the final foot, which is equal to only three, instead of being equal to four short syllables.

In the foot (*flowers ever*) we shall find a further exemplification of the principal of the bastard iambus, bastard trochee, and quick trochee, as I have been at some pains in describing these feet above. All the Prosodies on English verse would insist upon making an elision in "flowers," thus (flow'rs), but this is nonsense. In the quick trochee (mānў ăre thĕ) occurring in Mr. Cranch's *trochaic* line, we had to equalise the time of the three syllables (*ny, are, the*) to that of the one *short* syllable whose position they usurp.

Accordingly each of these syllables is equal to the third of a short syllable, that is to say, the *sixth of a long*. But in Byron's *dactylic* rhythm, we have to equalise the time of the three syllables (*ers, ev, er*) to that of the one *long* syllable whose position they usurp, or (which is the same thing) of the *two short*. Therefore the value of each of the syllables (*ers, ev,* and *er*) is the *third of a long*. We enunciate them with only half the rapidity we employ in enunciating the three final syllables of the quick trochee—which latter is a rare foot. The "*flowers ever*," on the contrary, is as common in the dactylic rhythm as is the *bastard* trochee in the trochaic, or the bastard iambus in the iambic. We may as well accent it with the curve of the crescent to the right and call it a *bastard dactyl*. A *bastard anapæst*, whose nature I now need be at no trouble in explaining, will of course occur now and then in an anapæstic rhythm.

In order to avoid any chance of that confusion which is apt to be introduced in an essay of this kind by too sudden and radical an alteration of the conventionalities to which the reader has been accustomed, I have thought it right to suggest for the accent marks of the bastard trochee, bastard iambus, etc. etc., certain characters which, in merely varying the direction of the ordinary short accent (˘) should imply, what is the fact, that the feet themselves are not *new* feet, in any proper sense, but simply modifications of the feet, respectively, from which they derive their names. Thus a bastard iambus is, in its essentiality, that is to say, in its time an iambus. The variation lies only in the *distribution* of this time. The time, for example, occupied by the one short (or *half of long*) syllable in the ordinary iambus is in the bastard spread equally over two syllables, which are accordingly the *fourth of long*.

But this fact—the fact of the essentiality, or whole time, of the foot being unchanged, is now so fully before the reader, that I may venture to propose, finally, an accentuation which shall answer the real purpose—that is to say, what should be the real purpose, of all accentuation—the purpose of expressing to the eye the exact relative value of every syllable employed in Verse.

I have already shown that enunciation, or *length*, is the point from which we start. In other words, we begin with a *long syllable*. This then is our unit; and there will be no need of accenting it at all. An unaccented syllable, in a system of accentuation, is to be regarded always as a long syllable. Thus a spondee would be without accent. In an iambus, the first syllable being "short," or the *half* of long, should be accented with a small 2, placed *beneath* the syllable; the last syllable, being long, should be unaccented; the whole would be thus (control). In a trochee, these accents would be merely conversed, thus (manly). In a dactyl, each of the two final syllables, being the half of long, should also be accented with a small 2 beneath the syllable; and the first syllable left unaccented, the whole would be thus (happiness). In an anapæst we should converse the dactyl thus (in the land). In the bastard dactyl, each of the three concluding syllables being the *third* of long, should be accented with a small 3 beneath the syllable, and the whole foot would stand thus (flowers ever). In the bastard anapæst we should converse the bastard dactyl thus (in the rebound). In the bastard iambus, each of the two initial syllables, being the fourth of long, should be accented below with a small 4; the whole foot would be thus, (in the rain). In the bastard trochee, we should converse the bastard iambus thus (many a). In the quick trochee, each of the three concluding syllables, being the *sixth* of long, should be accented below with a small 6; the whole foot would be thus (many are the). The quick iambus is not yet created, and most probably never will be; for it will be excessively useless, awkward, and liable to misconception—as I have already shown that even the quick trochee is;—but, should it appear, we must accent it by conversing the quick trochee. The cæsura, being variable in length, but always *longer than* "*long*," should be accented

above, with a number expressing the length or value of the distinctive foot of the rhythm in which it occurs. Thus a cæsura, occurring in a spondaic rhythm, would be accented with a small 2 above the syllable, or rather foot. Occurring in a dactylic or anapæstic rhythm, we also accent it with the 2 above the foot. Occurring in an iambic rhythm, however, it must be accented above with $1\frac{1}{2}$; for this is the relative value of the iambus. Occurring in the trochaic rhythm, we give it of course the same accentuation. For the complex $1\frac{1}{2}$, however, it would be advisable to substitute the simpler expression $\frac{3}{2}$, which amounts to the same thing.

In this system of accentuation Mr. Cranch's lines quoted above, would thus be written:

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me
6 6 6 2 2 $\frac{3}{2}$
In my | lonely | musing |
2 2

And they | drift so | strange and | swift
2 2 2 $\frac{3}{2}$
There's no | time for | choosing |
2 2 2

Which to | follow | for to | leave
2 2 2 $\frac{3}{2}$
Any, | seems a | losing. |
2 2 2

In the ordinary system the accentuation would be thus:

Mānў arĕ thĕ | thōughts thăt | cōme tŏ | mē
In mў | lōnely | mŭsĭng, |
ānd thēy | drīft sŏ | strānge ănd | swīft |
Therē's nŏ | timē fŏr | choōsĭng |
Whĭch tŏ | fōllŏw, | fŏr tŏ | lēave
ānў, | seēms ă | lōsĭng. |

It must be observed here that I do not grant this to be the "ordinary" *scansion*. On the contrary, I never yet met the man who had the faintest comprehension of the true scanning of these lines, or of such as these. But granting this to be the mode in which our Prosodies would

divide the feet they would accentuate the syllables as just above.

Now let any reasonable person compare the two modes. The first advantage seen in my mode is that of simplicity, of time, labour, and ink saved. Counting the fractions as *two* accents even there will be found only *twenty-six* accents to the stanza. In the common accentuation there are *forty-one*. But admit that all this is a trifle, which it is *not*, and let us proceed to points of importance. Does the common accentuation express the truth in particular, in general, or in any regard? Is it consistent with itself? Does it convey either to the ignorant or to the scholar a just conception of the rhythm of the lines? Each of these questions must be answered in the negative. The crescents being precisely similar must be understood as expressing, all of them, one and the same thing, and so all prosodies have always understood them and wished them to be understood. They express indeed "short," but this word has all kinds of meanings. It serves to represent (the reader is left to guess *when*) sometimes the half, sometimes the third, sometimes the fourth, sometimes the sixth, of "long," while "long" itself in the books is left undefined and undescribed. On the other hand, the horizontal accent, it may be said, expresses sufficiently well and unvaryingly the syllables which are meant to be long. It does nothing of the kind. This horizontal accent is placed over the cæsura (wherever, as in the Latin Prosodies, the cæsura is recognised) as well as over the ordinary long syllable, and implies anything and everything, just as the crescent. But grant that it does express the ordinary long syllables (leaving the cæsura out of question) have I not given the identical expression by not employing any expression at all? In a word, while the Prosodies, with a certain number of accents, express *precisely nothing whatever*, I, with scarcely half the number, have expressed everything which in a system of accentuation demands expression. In glancing at my mode in the lines of Mr. Cranch, it will be seen that it conveys not only the exact relation of the syllables and feet, among themselves, in those particular

lines, but their precise value in relation to any other existing or conceivable feet or syllables in any existing or conceivable system of rhythm.

The object of what we call *scansion* is the distinct marking of the rhythmical flow. Scansion with accents or perpendicular lines between the feet, that is to say scansion *by* the voice only, is scansion *to* the ear only, and all very good in its way. The written scansion addresses the ear through the eye. In either case the object is the distinct marking of the rhythmical, musical, or reading flow. There *can* be no other object, and there is none. Of course, then, the scansion and the reading flow should go hand in hand. The former must agree with the latter. The former represents and expresses the latter, and is good or bad as it truly or falsely represents and expresses it. If by the written scansion of a line we are not enabled to perceive any rhythm or music in the line, then either the line is unrhythmical or the scansion false. Apply all this to the English lines which we have quoted at various points in the course of this article. It will be found that the scansion exactly conveys the rhythm, and thus thoroughly fulfils the only purpose for which scansion is required.

But let the scansion *of the schools* be applied to the Greek and Latin verse, and what result do we find?—that the verse is one thing and the scansion quite another. The ancient verse *read* aloud is in general musical, and occasionally *very* musical. *Scanned* by the Prosodial rules we can, for the most part, make nothing of it whatever. In the case of the English verse the more emphatically we dwell on the divisions between the feet the more distinct is our perception of the kind of rhythm intended. In the case of the Greek and Latin the more we dwell the *less* distinct is this perception. To make this clear by an example:

Mæcenas, atavis edite regibus,
O, et præsidium et dulce decus meum,
Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
Collegisse juvat, metaque fervidis
Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis
Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos.

Now in *reading* these lines there is scarcely one person in a thousand who, if even ignorant of Latin, will not immediately feel and appreciate their flow, their music. A prosodist, however, informs the public that the *scansion* runs thus:

Mæce | nas ata | vis | edite | regibus |
O, et | præsidi' | et | dulce de | cus meum |
Sunt quos | curricu | lo | pulver' O | lympicum |
Colle | gisse ju | vat | metaque | fervidis |
Evi | tata ro | tis | palmaque | nobilis |
Terra | rum domi | nos | evehit | ad Deos. |

Now I do not deny that we get a *certain sort* of music from the lines if we read them according to this scansion, but I wish to call attention to the fact that this scansion and the certain sort of music which grows out of it are entirely at war not only with the reading flow which any ordinary person would naturally give the lines, but with the reading flow universally given them, and never denied them by even the most obstinate and stolid of scholars.

And now these questions are forced upon us—"Why exists this discrepancy between the modern verse with its scansion and the ancient verse with its scansion?"—"Why in the former case are there agreement and representation, while in the latter there is neither the one or the other?" or, to come to the point, "How are we to reconcile the ancient verse with the scholastic scansion of it?" This absolutely necessary conciliation—shall we bring it about by supposing the scholastic scansion wrong because the ancient verse is right, or by maintaining that the ancient verse is wrong because the scholastic scansion is not to be gainsaid?

Were we to adopt the latter mode of arranging the difficulty, we might, in some measure at least, simplify the expression of the arrangement by putting it thus—Because the pedants have no eyes therefore the old poets had no ears.

"But," say the gentlemen without the eyes, "the scholastic scansion, although certainly not handed down to us in form from the old poets themselves (the gentlemen without the ears), is nevertheless deduced from certain facts

which are supplied us by careful observation of the old poems."

And let us illustrate this strong position by an example from an American poet, who must be a poet of some eminence or he will not answer the purpose. Let us take Mr. Alfred B. Street. I remember these two lines of his:

> His sinuous path, by blazes, wound
> Among trunks grouped in myriads round.

With the *sense* of these lines I have nothing to do. When a poet is in a "fine frenzy," he may as well imagine a large forest as a small one—and "by blazes!" is *not* intended for an oath. My concern is with the rhythm, which is iambic.

Now let us suppose that, a thousand years hence, when the "American language" is dead, a learned prosodist should be deducing from "careful observation" of our best poets, a system of scansion for our poetry. And let us suppose that this prosodist had so little dependence in the generality and immutability of the laws of Nature as to assume in the outset that, because we lived a thousand years before his time, and made use of steam-engines instead of mesmeric balloons, we must therefore have had a *very* singular fashion of mouthing our vowels, and altogether of *Hudsonising* our verse. And let us suppose that with these and other fundamental propositions carefully put away in his brain, he should arrive at the line—

> Among | trunks grouped | in my | riads round.

Finding it an obviously iambic rhythm, he would divide it as above; and observing that "trunks" made the first member of an iambus, he would call it short, as Mr. Street intended it to be. Now further:—if instead of admitting the possibility that Mr. Street (who by that time would be called Street simply, just as we say Homer)—that Mr. Street might have been in the habit of writing carelessly, as the poets of the prosodist's own era did, and as all poets will do (on account of being geniuses),—instead of admitting

this, suppose the learned scholar should make a "rule" and put it in a book, to the effect that, in the American verse, the vowel *u, when found imbedded among nine consonants,* was *short:* what, under such circumstances, would the sensible people of the scholar's day have a right not only to think, but to say of that scholar?—why, that he was a "fool—by blazes!"

I have put an extreme case, but it strikes at the root of the error. The "rules" are grounded in "authority;" and this "authority"—can any one tell us what it means? or can any one suggest anything that it may *not* mean? Is it not clear that the "scholar" above referred to, might as readily have deduced from authority a totally false system as a partially true one? To deduce from authority a consistent prosody of the ancient metres would indeed have been within the limits of the barest possibility; and the task has *not* been accomplished, for the reason that it demands a species of ratiocination altogether out of keeping with the brain of a bookworm. A rigid scrutiny will show that the very few "rules" which have not as many exceptions as examples, are those which have, by accident, their true bases not in authority, but in the omniprevalent laws of syllabification; such, for example, as the rule which declares a vowel before two consonants to be long.

In a word, the gross confusion and antagonism of the scholastic prosody, as well as its marked inapplicability to the reading flow of the rhythms it pretends to illustrate, are attributable, first, to the utter absence of natural principle as a guide in the investigations which have been undertaken by inadequate men; and secondly, to the neglect of the obvious consideration that the ancient poems, which have been the *criteria* throughout, were the work of men who must have written as loosely, and with as little definitive system, as ourselves.

Were Horace alive to-day, he would divide for us his first Ode thus, and "make great eyes" when assured by the prosodists that he had no business to make any such division!

Mæcenas | atavis | edite | regibus |
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2
O et præ | sidium et | dulce de | cus meum |
2 2 3 3 3 2 2 2 2
Sunt quos cur | riculo | pulverem O | lympicum |
2 2 2 2 3 3 3 2 2
Collegisse | juvat | metaque | fervidis |
3 3 3 2 2 2 2
Evitata | rotis | palmaque | nobilis |
3 3 3 2 2 2 2
Terrarum | dominos | evehit | ad Deos. |
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

Read by this scansion, the flow is preserved; and the more we dwell on the divisions, the more the intended rhythm becomes apparent. Moreover, the feet have all the same time; while, in the scholastic scansions, trochees — admitted trochees—are absurdly employed as equivalents to spondees and dactyls. The books declare, for instance, that the first foot of this species of verse may be a trochee, and seem to be gloriously unconscious that to put a trochee in apposition with a longer foot, is to violate the inviolable principle of all music, *time*.

It will be said, however, by some people, that I have no business to make a dactyl out of such obviously long syllables as *sunt*, *quos*, *cur*. Certainly I have no business to do so. I *never* do so. And Horace should not have done so. But he did. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Longfellow do the same thing every day. And merely because these gentlemen now and then forget themselves in this way, it would be hard if some future prosodist should insist upon twisting the "Thanatopsis," or the "Spanish Student," into a jumble of trochees, spondees, and dactyls.

It may be said also by some other people that, in the word *decus*, I have succeeded no better than the books, in making the scansional agree with the reading flow; and that *decus* was not pronounced de*cus*. I reply, that there can be no doubt of the word having been pronounced, in this case, de*cus*. It must be observed that the Latin inflection, or variation of a word in its terminating syllables, caused the Romans—*must* have caused them—to pay greater attention to the termination of a word than to its commencement, or than we do to the termination of our words.

The end of the Latin word established that relation of the word with other words which we establish by prepositions or auxiliary verbs. Therefore it would seem infinitely less odd to them, than it does to us, to dwell at any time, for any slight purpose, abnormally, on a terminating syllable. In verse, this license—scarcely a license—would be frequently admitted. These ideas unlock the secret of such lines as the

Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilici*bus sus*,

and the

Parturiunt montes ; nascetur ridicu*lus mus*,

which I quoted some time ago while speaking of rhyme.

As regards the prosodial elisions, such as that of *rem* before *O*, in *pulverem Olympicum*, it is really difficult to understand how so dismally silly a notion could have entered the brain even of a pedant. Were it demanded of me why the books cut off one *vowel* before another, I might say—It is perhaps because the books think that, since a bad reader is so apt to slide the one vowel into the other at any rate, it is just as well to print them *ready-slided.* But in the case of the terminating *m*, which is the most readily pronounced of all consonants (as the infantile *mamma* will testify), and the most impossible to cheat the ear of by any system of sliding—in the case of the *m*, I should be driven to reply that, to the best of my belief, the prosodists did the thing, because they had a fancy for doing it, and wished to see how funny it would look after it was done. The thinking reader, will perceive that, from the great facility with which *em* may be enunciated, it is admirably suited to form one of the rapid short syllables in the bastard dactyl (pulverem O) ; but because the books had no conception of
3 3 3
a bastard dactyl, they knocked it on the head at once—by cutting off its tail!

Let me now give a specimen of the true scansion of another Horatian measure—embodying an instance of proper elision.

Integer | vitæ | scelerisque | purus |
2 2 3 3 3
Non eget | Mauri | jaculis ne | que arcu |
2 2 3 3 3
Nec vene | natis | gravida sa | gittis,
2 2 3 3 3
Fusce, pha | retrâ.
2 2

Here the regular recurrence of the bastard dactyl gives great animation to the rhythm. The *e* before the *a* in *que arcu*, is, almost of sheer necessity, cut off—that is to say, run into the a so as to preserve the spondee. But even this license it would have been better not to take.

Had I space, nothing would afford me greater pleasure than to proceed with the scansion of *all* the ancient rhythms, and to show how easily, by the help of common sense, the intended music of each and all can be rendered instantaneously apparent. But I have already overstepped my limits, and must bring this paper to an end.

It will never do, however, to omit all mention of the heroic hexameter.

I began the "processes" by a suggestion of the spondee as the first step towards verse. But the innate monotony of the spondee has caused its disappearance as the basis of rhythm from all modern poetry. We *may* say, indeed, that the French heroic—the most wretchedly monotonous verse in existence—is to all intents and purposes spondaic. But it is not designedly spondaic, and if the French were ever to examine it at all, they would no doubt pronounce it iambic. It must be observed that the French language is strangely peculiar in this point—*that it is without accentuation and consequently without verse.* The genius of the people, rather than the structure of the tongue, declares that their words are for the most part enunciated with a uniform dwelling on each syllable. For example, *we* say "syll*a*bific*a*tion." A Frenchman would say syl-la-bi-fi-ca-ti-on, dwelling on no one of the syllables with any noticeable particularity. Here again I put an extreme case in order to be well understood, but the general fact is as I give it—that, comparatively, the French have *no* accentuation; and there can be nothing worth the name of verse without. Therefore, the

French have no verse worth the name—which is the fact put in sufficiently plain terms. Their iambic rhythm so superabounds in absolute spondees as to warrant me in calling its basis spondaic; but French is the *only* modern tongue which has any rhythm with such basis, and even in the French it is, as I have said, unintentional.

Admitting, however, the validity of my suggestion, that the spondee was the first approach to verse, we should expect to find, first, natural spondees (words each forming just a spondee), most abundant in the most ancient languages; and, secondly, we should expect to find spondees forming the basis of the most ancient rhythms. These expectations are in both cases confirmed.

Of the Greek hexameter the intentional basis is spondaic. The dactyls are the *variation* of the theme. It will be observed that there is no absolute certainty about *their* points of interposition. The penultimate foot, it is true, is usually a dactyl, but not uniformly so, while the ultimate, on which the ear *lingers* is always a spondee. Even that the penultimate is usually a dactyl may be clearly referred to the necessity of winding up with the *distinctive* spondee. In corroboration of this idea, again, we should look to find the penultimate spondee most usual in the most ancient verse, and, accordingly, we find it more frequent in the Greek than in the Latin hexameter.

But besides all this, spondees are not only more prevalent in the heroic hexameter than dactyls, but occur to such an extent as is even unpleasant to modern ears, on account of monotony. What the modern chiefly appreciates and admires in the Greek hexameter is the *melody of the abundant vowel sounds.* The Latin hexameters *really* please very few moderns—although so many pretend to fall into ecstasies about them. In the hexameters quoted several pages ago, from Silius Italicus, the preponderance of the spondee is strikingly manifest. Besides the natural spondees of the Greek and Latin, numerous artificial ones arise in the verse of these tongues on account of the tendency which inflection has to throw full accentuation on terminal

syllables, and the preponderance of the spondee is further ensured by the comparative infrequency of the small prepositions which *we* have to serve us *instead* of case, and also the absence of the diminutive auxiliary verbs with which *we* have to eke out the expression of our primary ones. These are the monosyllables whose abundance serves to stamp the poetic genius of a language as tripping or dactylic.

Now paying no attention to these facts, Sir Philip Sidney, Professor Longfellow, and innumerable other persons more or less modern, have busied themselves in constructing what they supposed to be "English hexameters on the model of the Greek." The only difficulty was that (even leaving out of question the melodious masses of vowel) these gentlemen never could get their English hexameters to *sound* Greek. Did they *look* Greek? — that should have been the query, and the reply might have led to a solution of the riddle. In placing a copy of ancient hexameters side by side with a copy (in similar type) of such hexameters as Professor Longfellow, or Professor Felton, or the Frogpondian Professors collectively, are in the shameful practice of composing "on the model of the Greek," it will be seen that the latter (hexameters, not professors) are about one-third longer *to the eye* on an average, than the former. The more abundant dactyls make the difference. And it is the greater number of spondees in the Greek than in the English, in the ancient than in the modern tongue, which has caused it to fall out that while these eminent scholars were groping about in the dark for a Greek hexameter, which is a spondaic rhythm varied now and then by dactyls, they merely stumbled, to the lasting scandal of scholarship, over something which, on account of its long-leggedness, we may as well term a Feltonian hexameter, and which is a dactylic rhythm interrupted rarely by artificial spondees which are no spondees at all, and which are curiously thrown in by the heels at all kinds of improper and impertinent points.

Here is a specimen of the Longfellowine hexameter.

Also the | church with | in was a | dorned for | this was the | season |
In which the | young their | parent's | hope and the | loved ones of | Heaven |
Should at the | foot of the | altarre | new the | vows of their | baptism |
Therefore each | nook and | corner was | swept and | cleaned and the | dust was |
Blown from the | walls and | ceiling and | from the | oil-painted | benches. |

Mr. Longfellow is a man of imagination, but *can* he imagine that any individual, with a proper understanding of the danger of lockjaw, would make the attempt of twisting his mouth into the shape necessary for the emission of such spondees as "par*ents*," and "from the," or such dactyls as "cleaned and the," and "loved ones of?" "Baptism" is by no means a bad spondee—perhaps because it happens to be a dactyl,—of all the rest, however, I am dreadfully ashamed.

But these feet, dactyls and spondees, all together, should thus be put at once into their proper position:

"Also, the church within was adorned; for this was the season in which the young, their parents' hope, and the loved ones of Heaven, should, at the feet of the altar, renew the vows of their baptism. Therefore, each nook and corner was swept and cleaned; and the dust was blown from the walls and ceiling, and from the oil-painted benches."

There!—That is respectable prose, and it will incur no danger of ever getting its character ruined by anybody's mistaking it for verse.

But even when we let these modern hexameters go as Greek, and merely hold them fast in their proper character of Longfellowine, or Feltonian, or Frogpondian, we must still condemn them as having been committed in a radical misconception of the philosophy of verse. The spondee, as I observed, is the *theme* of the Greek line. Most of the ancient hexameters *begin* with spondees, for the reason that the spondee *is* the theme, and the ear is filled with it as with a burden. Now the Feltonian dactylics have, in the same way, dactyls for the theme, and most of them begin with dactyls—which is all very proper if not very Greek—

but, unhappily, the one point at which they *are* very Greek is that point, precisely, at which they should be nothing but Feltonian. They always *close* with what is meant for a spondee. To be consistently silly they should die off in a dactyl.

That a truly Greek hexameter *cannot*, however, be readily composed in English, is a proposition which I am by no means inclined to admit. I think I could manage the point myself. For example:

Do tell! | when may we | hope to make | men of sense | out of the | Pundits |
Born and brought | up with their | snouts deep | down in the | mud of the | Frog-pond?
Why ask? | who ever | yet saw | money made | out of a | fat old |
Jew, or | downright | upright | nutmegs | out of a | pine-knot? |

The proper spondee predominance is here preserved. Some of the dactyls are not so good as I could wish, but, upon the whole the rhythm is very decent—to say nothing of its excellent sense.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMPOSITION.

CHARLES DICKENS, in a note now lying before me, alluding to an examination I once made of the mechanism of "Barnaby Rudge," says—"By the way, are you aware that Godwin wrote his 'Caleb Williams' backwards? He first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what had been done."

I cannot think this the *precise* mode of procedure on the part of Godwin—and indeed what he himself acknowledges is not altogether in accordance with Mr. Dickens's idea—but the author of "Caleb Williams" was too good an artist not to perceive the advantage derivable from at least a somewhat similar process. Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen. It is only with the *dénouement* constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention.

There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis—or one is suggested by an incident of the day—or, at best, the author sets himself to work in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative—designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or authorial comment, whatever crevices of fact or action may, from page to page, render themselves apparent.

I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect*. Keeping originality *always* in view—for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so easily attainable a source of interest—I say to myself, in the first place, "Of the innumerable effects or impressions of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?"

Having chosen a novel first, and secondly, a vivid effect, I consider whether it can be best wrought by incident or tone —whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone—afterwards looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of event or tone as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would—that is to say, who could—detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion. Why such a paper has never been given to the world, I am much at a loss to say—but perhaps the authorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy —an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought—at the true purposes seized only at the last moment—at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived not at the maturity of full view—at the fully-matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable—at the cautious selections and rejections—at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions—the tackle for scene-shifting—the step-ladders, and demon-traps—the cock's feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary *histrio*.

I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common, in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. In general, suggestions, having arisen pell-mell, are pursued and forgotten in a similar manner.

For my own part, I have neither sympathy with the repugnance alluded to, nor, at any time, the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions; and, since the interest of an analysis, or reconstruction, such as I have considered a *desideratum*, is quite independent of any real or fancied interest in the thing

analysed, it will not be regarded as a breach of decorum on my part to show the *modus operandi* by which some one of my own works was put together. I select "The Raven" as most generally known. It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referable either to accident or intuition—that the work proceeded step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem.

Let us dismiss, as irrelevant to the poem, *per se*, the circumstance—or say the necessity—which, in the first place, gave rise to the intention of composing *a* poem that should suit at once the popular and the critical taste.

We commence, then, with this intention.

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression—for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed. But since, *ceteris paribus*, no poet can afford to dispense with *anything* that may advance his design, it but remains to be seen whether there is, in extent, any advantage to counterbalance the loss of unity which attends it. Here I say no, at once. What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. For this reason, at least one-half of the "Paradise Lost" is essentially prose—a succession of poetical excitements interspersed, *inevitably*, with corresponding depressions—the whole being deprived, through the extremeness of its length, of the vastly important artistic element, totality, or unity of effect.

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting—and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as "Robinson Crusoe" (demanding no unity), this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this

limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit—in other words, to the excitement or elevation—again, in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing; for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect—this, with one proviso—that a certain degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular, while not below the critical taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem—a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed: and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which, with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration—the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. A few words, however, in elucidation of my real meaning, which some of my friends have evinced a disposition to misrepresent. That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect—they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of *soul—not* of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating "the beautiful." Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem, merely because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring from direct causes—that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation alluded to, is *most readily* attained in the poem. Now

the object Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable to a certain extent in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul. It by no means follows from anything here said that passion, or even truth, may not be introduced, and even profitably introduced, into a poem—for they may serve in elucidation, or aid the general effect, as do discords in music, by contrast—but the true artist will always contrive, first, to tone them into proper subservience to the predominant aim, and, secondly, to enveil them, as far as possible, in that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem.

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation—and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness*. Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction, with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem—some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects—or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value, and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As commonly used, the *refrain*, or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone—both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity—of

repetition. I resolved to diversify, and so heighten the effect, by adhering in general to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought: that is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation *of the application* of the *refrain* —the *refrain* itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the *nature* of my *refrain*. Since its application was to be repeatedly varied it was clear that the *refrain* itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence would of course be the facility of the variation. This led me at once to a single word as the best *refrain*.

The question now arose as to the *character* of the word. Having made up my mind to a *refrain*, the division of the poem into stanzas was of course a corollary, the *refrain* forming the close to each stanza. That such a close, to have force, must be sonorous and susceptible of protracted emphasis, admitted no doubt, and these considerations inevitably led me to the long *o* as the most sonorous vowel in connection with *r* as the most producible consonant.

The sound of the *refrain* being thus determined, it became necessary to select a word embodying this sound, and at the same time in the fullest possible keeping with that melancholy which I had predetermined as the tone of the poem. In such a search it would have been absolutely impossible to overlook the word "Nevermore." In fact it was the very first which presented itself.

The next *desideratum* was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "nevermore." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by a *human* being—I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately

arose the idea of a *non*-reasoning creature capable of speech, and very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended *tone*.

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven, the bird of ill-omen, monotonously repeating the one word "Nevermore" at the conclusion of each stanza in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object—*supremeness* or perfection at all points, I asked myself—"Of all melancholy topics what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" Death, was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length the answer here also is obvious—"When it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*: the death then of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world, and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover."

I had now to combine the two ideas of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore." I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying at every turn the *application* of the word repeated, but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending, that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application*. I saw that I could make the first query propounded by the lover—the first query to which the Raven should reply "Nevermore"—that I could make this first query a commonplace one, the second less so, the third still less, and so on, until at length the lover, startled from his original *nonchalance* by the melancholy character of the word itself, by its frequent repetition, and by a consideration of the ominous reputation of the fowl that uttered it, is at length excited to superstition, and wildly

propounds queries of a far different character—queries whose solution he has passionately at heart—propounds them half in superstition and half in that species of despair which delights in self-torture—propounds them not altogether because he believes in the prophetic or demoniac character of the bird (which reason assures him is merely repeating a lesson learned by rote), but because he experiences a frenzied pleasure in so modelling his questions as to receive from the *expected* "Nevermore" the most delicious because the most intolerable of sorrows. Perceiving the opportunity thus afforded me, or, more strictly, thus forced upon me in the progress of the construction, I first established in my mind the climax or concluding query—that query to which "Nevermore" should be in the last place an answer—that query in reply to which this word "Nevermore" should involve the utmost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

Here then the poem may be said to have had its beginning, at the end where all works of art should begin, for it was here at this point of my preconsiderations that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the raven—"Nevermore."

I composed this stanza, at this point, first, that, by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover, and secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the metre, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza, as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. Had I been able in the subsequent composition to construct more vigorous stanzas I should without scruple have purposely enfeebled them so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect.

And here I may as well say a few words of the versification. My first object (as usual) was originality. The extent to which this has been neglected in versification is one of the most unaccountable things in the world. Admitting that there is little possibility of variety in mere *rhythm*, it is still clear that the possible varieties of metre and stanza are absolutely infinite, and yet, *for centuries, no man, in verse, has ever done, or ever seemed to think of doing, an original thing.* The fact is that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation.

Of course I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or metre of the "Raven." The former is trochaic—the latter is octametre acatalectic, alternating with heptametre catalectic repeated in the *refrain* of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrametre catalectic. Less pedantically—the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable followed by a short; the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet, the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds), the third of eight, the fourth of seven and a half, the fifth the same, the sixth three and a half. Now, each of these lines taken individually has been employed before, and what originality the "Raven" has, is in their *combination into stanza*, nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale*. For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident—it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has

an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished—this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage—it being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird—the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and, secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, Pallas, itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic—approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible—is given to the Raven's entrance. He comes in "with many a flirt and flutter."

> Not the *least obeisance made he*—not a moment stopped or stayed he,
> *But, with mien of lord or lady,* perched above my chamber door.

In the two stanzas which follow, the design is more obviously carried out:—

Then this ebony bird, beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the *grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore*,
"Though thy *crest be shorn and shaven*, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore?"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled *this ungainly fowl* to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness—this tone commencing in the stanza directly following the one last quoted, with the line,

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only, etc.

From this epoch the lover no longer jests—no longer sees anything even of the fantastic in the Raven's demeanour. He speaks of him as a "grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore," and feels the "fiery eyes" burning into his "bosom's core." This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part, is intended to induce a similar one on the part of the reader—to bring the mind into a proper frame for the *dénouement*—which is now brought about as rapidly and as *directly* as possible.

With the *dénouement* proper—with the Raven's reply, "Nevermore," to the lover's final demand if he shall meet his mistress in another world—the poem, in its obvious phase, that of a simple narrative, may be said to have its completion. So far, everything is within the limits of the accountable—of the real. A raven, having learned by rote the single word "Nevermore," and having escaped from the custody of its owner, is driven at midnight, through the violence of a storm, to seek admission at a window from which a light still gleams—the chamber-window of a student, occupied half in poring over a volume, half in dreaming of

a beloved mistress deceased. The casement being thrown open at the fluttering of the bird's wings, the bird itself perches on the most convenient seat out of the immediate reach of the student, who, amused by the incident and the oddity of the visitor's demeanour, demands of it, in jest and without looking for a reply, its name. The raven addressed, answers with its customary word, "Nevermore"—a word which finds immediate echo in the melancholy heart of the student, who, giving utterance aloud to certain thoughts suggested by the occasion, is again startled by the fowl's repetition of "Nevermore." The student now guesses the state of the case, but is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the extreme, of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skilfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some under current, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with *the ideal.* It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under current of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem—their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. The under-current of meaning is rendered first apparent in the lines—

"Take thy beak from out *my heart*, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven "Nevermore!"

It will be observed that the words, "from out my heart," involve the first metaphorical expression in the poem. They, with the answer, "Nevermore," dispose the mind to seek a moral in all that has been previously narrated. The reader begins now to regard the Raven as emblematical—but it is not until the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him emblematical of *Mournful and never-ending Remembrance* is permitted distinctly to be seen:

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor:
And my soul *from out that shadow* that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore.

PHILOSOPHY OF FURNITURE.

In the internal decoration, if not in the external architecture of their residences, the English are supreme. The Italians have but little sentiment beyond marbles and colours. In France, *meliora probant deteriora sequuntur*—the people are too much a race of gad-abouts to maintain those household proprieties of which, indeed, they have a delicate appreciation, or at least the elements of a proper sense. The Chinese and most of the Eastern races have a warm but inappropriate fancy. The Scotch are *poor* decorists. The Dutch have perhaps an indeterminate idea that a curtain is not a cabbage. In Spain they are *all* curtains—a nation of hangmen. The Russians do not furnish. The Hottentots and Kickapoos are very well in their way. The Yankees alone are preposterous.

How this happens it is not difficult to see. We have no aristocracy of blood, and having therefore as a natural, and indeed as an inevitable thing, fashioned for ourselves an aristocracy of dollars, the *display of wealth* has here to take the place and perform the office of the heraldic display in monarchical countries. By a transition readily understood, and which might have been as readily foreseen, we have been brought to merge in simple *show* our notions of taste itself.

To speak less abstractly. In England, for example, no mere parade of costly appurtenances would be so likely as with us, to create an impression of the beautiful in respect to the appurtenances themselves—or of taste as regards the proprietor:—this for the reason, first, that wealth is not, in England, the loftiest object of ambition as constituting a nobility; and secondly, that there, the true nobility of blood, confining itself within the strict limits of legitimate taste, rather avoids than affects that mere costliness in which a *parvenu* rivalry may at any time be successfully attempted. The people *will* imitate the nobles, and the result is a

thorough diffusion of the proper feeling. But in America, the coins current being the sole arms of the aristocracy, their display, may be said, in general, to be the sole means of aristocratic distinction; and the populace, looking always upward for models, are insensibly led to confound the two entirely separate ideas of magnificence and beauty. In short, the cost of an article of furniture has at length come to be with us nearly the sole test of its merit in a decorative point of view—and this test, once established, has led the way to many analogous errors, readily traceable to the one primitive folly.

There could be nothing more directly offensive to the eye of an artist than the interior of what is termed in the United States—that is to say, in Appalachia—a well-furnished apartment. Its most usual defect is a want of keeping. We speak of the keeping of a room as we would of the keeping of a picture — for both the picture and the room are amenable to those undeviating principles which regulate all varieties of art; and very nearly the same laws by which we decide on the higher merits of a painting, suffice for decision on the adjustment of a chamber.

A want of keeping is observable sometimes in the character of the several pieces of furniture, but generally in their colours or modes of adaptation to use. *Very* often the eye is offended by their inartistical arrangement. Straight lines are too prevalent—too uninterruptedly continued—or clumsily interrupted at right angles. If curved lines occur, they are repeated into unpleasant uniformity. By undue precision, the appearance of many a fine apartment is utterly spoiled.

Curtains are rarely well disposed, or well chosen in respect to other decorations. With formal furniture, curtains are out of place; and an extensive volume of drapery of any kind is, under any circumstances, irreconcilable with good taste—the proper quantum, as well as the proper adjustment, depending upon the character of the general effect.

Carpets are better understood of late than of ancient days, but we still very frequently err in their patterns and

colours. The soul of the apartment is the carpet. From it are deduced not only the hues but the forms of all objects incumbent. A judge at common law may be an ordinary man; a good judge of a carpet *must be* a genius. Yet we have heard discoursing of carpets, with the air "*d'un mouton qui rêve*," fellows who should not and who could not be entrusted with the management of their own *moustaches*. Every one knows that a large floor *may* have a covering of large figures, and that a small one *must* have a covering of small—yet this is not all the knowledge in the world. As regards texture, the Saxony is alone admissible. Brussels is the preterpluperfect tense of fashion, and Turkey is taste in its dying agonies. Touching pattern—a carpet should *not* be bedizened out like a Riccaree Indian—all red chalk, yellow ochre, and cock's feathers. In brief—distinct grounds, and vivid circular or cycloid figures, *of no meaning*, are here Median laws. The abomination of flowers, or representations of well-known objects of any kind, should not be endured within the limits of Christendom. Indeed, whether on carpets, or curtains, or tapestry, or ottoman coverings, all upholstery of this nature should be rigidly Arabesque. As for those antique floor-cloths still occasionally seen in the dwellings of the rabble—cloths of huge, sprawling, and radiating devices, stripe-interspersed, and glorious with all hues, among which no ground is intelligible—these are but the wicked invention of a race of time-servers and money-lovers—children of Baal and worshippers of Mammon—Benthams, who, to spare thought and economise fancy, first cruelly invented the Kaleidoscope, and then established joint-stock companies to twirl it by steam.

Glare is a leading error in the philosophy of American household decoration—an error easily recognised as deduced from the perversion of taste just specified. We are violently enamoured of gas and of glass. The former is totally inadmissible within doors. Its harsh and unsteady light offends. No one having both brains and eyes will use it. A mild, or what artists term a cool light, with its consequent warm shadows, will do wonders for even an ill-furnished apartment. Never was a more lovely thought than that of the

astral lamp. We mean, of course, the astral lamp proper —the lamp of Argand, with its original plain ground-glass shade, and its tempered and uniform moonlight rays. The cut-glass shade is a weak invention of the enemy. The eagerness with which we have adopted it, partly on account of its *flashiness*, but principally on account of its *greater cost*, is a good commentary on the proposition with which we began. It is not too much to say, that the deliberate employer of a cut-glass shade is either radically deficient in taste, or blindly subservient to the caprices of fashion. The light proceeding from one of these gaudy abominations is unequal, broken, and painful. It alone is sufficient to mar a world of good effect in the furniture subjected to its influence. Female loveliness, in especial, is more than one-half disenchanted beneath its evil eye.

In the matter of glass, generally, we proceed upon false principles. Its leading feature is *glitter*—and in that one word how much of all that is detestable do we express! Flickering, unquiet lights, are *sometimes* pleasing — to children, and idiots, always so—but in the embellishment of a room they should be scrupulously avoided. In truth, even strong *steady* lights are inadmissible. The huge and unmeaning glass chandeliers, prism-cut, gas-lighted, and without shade, which dangle in our most fashionable drawing-rooms, may be cited as the quintessence of all that is false in taste or preposterous in folly.

The rage for *glitter*—because its idea has become, as we before observed, confounded with that of magnificence in the abstract—has led us, also, to the exaggerated employment of mirrors. We line our dwellings with great British plates, and then imagine we have done a fine thing. Now the slightest thought will be sufficient to convince any one who has an eye at all of the ill effect of numerous looking-glasses, and especially of large ones. Regarded apart from its reflection, the mirror presents a continuous, flat, colourless, unrelieved surface — a thing always and obviously unpleasant. Considered as a reflector, it is potent in producing a monstrous and odious uniformity; and the evil is here aggravated, not in merely direct proportion with the

augmentation of its sources, but in a ratio constantly increasing. In fact, a room with four or five mirrors arranged at random, is, for all purposes of artistic show, a room of no shape at all. If we add to this evil, the attendant glitter upon glitter, we have a perfect farrago of discordant and displeasing effects. The veriest bumpkin, on entering an apartment so bedizened, would be instantly aware of something wrong, although he might be altogether unable to assign a cause for his dissatisfaction. But let the same person be led into a room tastefully furnished, and he would be startled into an exclamation of pleasure and surprise.

It is an evil growing out of our republican institutions that here a man of large purse has usually a very little soul which he keeps in it. The corruption of taste is a portion or a pendant of the dollar-manufacture. As we grow rich our ideas grow rusty. It is, therefore, not among *our* aristocracy that we must look (if at all, in Appalachia) for the spirituality of a British *boudoir*. But we have seen apartments in the tenure of Americans of modern means, which, in negative merit at least, might vie with any of the *ormolu'd* cabinets of our friends across the water. Even *now*, there is present to our mind's eye a small and not ostentatious chamber with whose decorations no fault can be found. The proprietor lies asleep on a sofa—the weather is cool —the time is near midnight: we will make a sketch of the room during his slumber.

It is oblong—some thirty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth—a shape affording the best (ordinary) opportunities for the adjustment of furniture. It has but one door —by no means a wide one—which is at one end of the parallelogram, and but two windows, which are at the other. These latter are large, reaching down to the floor—have deep recesses—and open on an Italian *veranda*. Their panes are of a crimson-tinted glass, set in rose-wood framings, more massive than usual. They are curtained within the recess by a thick silver tissue adapted to the shape of the window, and hanging loosely in small volumes. Without the recess are curtains of an exceedingly rich crimson silk, fringed with a deep network of gold, and lined with the

silver tissue, which is the material of the exterior blind. There are no cornices; but the folds of the whole fabric (which are sharp rather than massive, and have an airy appearance), issue from beneath a broad entablature of rich giltwork, which encircles the room at the junction of the ceiling and walls. The drapery is thrown open also, or closed, by means of a thick rope of gold loosely enveloping it, and resolving itself readily into a knot; no pins or other such devices are apparent. The colours of the curtains and their fringe—the tints of crimson and gold—appear everywhere in profusion, and determine the *character* of the room. The carpet—of Saxony material—is quite half-an-inch thick, and is of the same crimson ground, relieved simply by the appearance of a gold cord (like that festooning the curtains) slightly relieved above the surface of the *ground*, and thrown upon it in such a manner as to form a succession of short irregular curves — one occasionally overlaying the other. The walls are prepared with a glossy paper of a silver grey tint, spotted with small Arabesque devices of a fainter hue of the prevalent crimson. Many paintings relieve the expanse of the paper. These are chiefly landscapes of an imaginative cast—such as the fairy grottoes of Stanfield, or the lake of the Dismal Swamp of Chapman. There are, nevertheless, three or four female heads of an ethereal beauty—portraits in the manner of Sully. The tone of each picture is warm, but dark. There are no "brilliant effects." *Repose* speaks in all. Not one is of small size. Diminutive paintings give that *spotty* look to a room, which is the blemish of so many a fine work of Art overtouched. The frames are broad but not deep, and richly carved, without being *dulled* or filagreed. They have the whole lustre of burnished gold. They lie flat on the walls, and do not hang off with cords. The designs themselves are often seen to better advantage in this latter position, but the general appearance of the chamber is injured. But one mirror—and this not a very large one—is visible. In shape it is nearly circular —and it is hung so that a reflection of the person can be obtained from it in none of the ordinary sitting-places of the room. Two large low sofas of rosewood and crimson

silk, gold-flowered, form the only seats, with the exception of two light conversation chairs, also of rosewood. There is a pianoforte (rosewood also), without cover, and thrown open. An octagonal table, formed altogether of the richest gold-threaded marble, is placed near one of the sofas. This is also without cover—the drapery of the curtains has been thought sufficient. Four large and gorgeous Sèvres vases, in which bloom a profusion of sweet and vivid flowers, occupy the slightly rounded angles of the room. A tall candelabrum, bearing a small antique lamp with highly perfumed oil, is standing near the head of my sleeping friend. Some light and graceful hanging shelves, with golden edges and crimson silk cords with gold tassels, sustain two or three hundred magnificently bound books. Beyond these things, there is no furniture, if we except an Argand lamp, with a plain crimson-tinted ground-glass shade, which depends from the lofty vaulted ceiling by a single slender gold chain, and throws a tranquil but magical radiance over all.

MAELZEL'S CHESS-PLAYER.

PERHAPS no exhibition of the kind has ever elicited so general attention as the Chess-Player of Maelzel. Wherever seen, it has been an object of intense curiosity to all persons who think. Yet the question of its *modus operandi* is still undetermined. Nothing has been written on this topic which can be considered as decisive—and accordingly we find everywhere men of mechanical genius, of great general acuteness, and discriminative understanding, who make no scruple in pronouncing the Automaton a *pure machine*, unconnected with human agency in its movements, and consequently, beyond all comparison, the most astonishing of the inventions of mankind. And such it would undoubtedly be were they right in their supposition. Assuming this hypothesis, it would be grossly absurd to compare with the Chess-Player any similar thing of either modern or ancient days. Yet there have been many and wonderful automata. In Brewster's "Letters on Natural Magic," we have an account of the most remarkable. Among these may be mentioned, as having beyond doubt existed, firstly, the coach invented by M. Camus for the amusement of Louis XIV. when a child. A table about four feet square was introduced into the room appropriated for the exhibition. Upon this table was placed a carriage six inches in length, made of wood, and drawn by two horses of the same material. One window being down, a lady was seen on the back seat. A coachman held the reins on the box, and a footman and page were in their places behind. M. Camus now touched a spring; whereupon the coachman smacked his whip, and the horses proceeded in a natural manner, along the edge of the table, drawing after them the carriage. Having gone as far as possible in this direction, a sudden turn was made to the left, and the vehicle was driven at right angles to its former course, and still closely along the edge of the table. In this way the coach proceeded until

it arrived opposite the chair of the young prince. It then stopped, the page descended and opened the door, the lady alighted, and presented a petition to her sovereign. She then re-entered. The page put up the steps, closed the door, and resumed his station. The coachman whipped his horses, and the carriage was driven back to its original position.

The magician of M. Maillardet is also worthy of notice. We copy the following account of it from the "Letters" before mentioned of Sir D. Brewster, who derived his information principally from the Edinburgh Encyclopædia.

"One of the most popular pieces of mechanism which we have seen is the Magician constructed by M. Maillardet, for the purpose of answering certain given questions. A figure, dressed like a magician, appears seated at the bottom of a wall, holding a wand in one hand, and a book in the other. A number of questions, ready prepared, are inscribed on oval medallions, and the spectator takes any of these he chooses, and to which he wishes an answer, and having placed it in a drawer ready to receive it, the drawer shuts with a spring till the answer is returned. The magician then arises from his seat, bows his head, describes circles with his wand, and consulting the book as if in deep thought, he lifts it towards his face. Having thus appeared to ponder over the proposed question, he raises his wand, and striking with it the wall above his head, two folding-doors fly open, and display an appropriate answer to the question. The doors again close, the magician resumes his original position, and the drawer opens to return the medallion. There are twenty of these medallions, all containing different questions, to which the magician returns the most suitable and striking answers. The medallions are thin plates of brass, of an elliptical form, exactly resembling each other. Some of the medallions have a question inscribed on each side, both of which the magician answers in succession. If the drawer is shut without a medallion being put in it, the magician rises, consults his book, shakes his head, and resumes his seat. The folding-doors remain shut, and the drawer is returned empty. If two medallions are put into the drawer

together, an answer is returned only to the lower one. When the machinery is wound up, the movements continue about an hour, during which time about fifty questions may be answered. The inventor stated that the means by which the different medallions acted upon the machinery, so as to produce the proper answers to the questions which they contained, were extremely simple.

The duck of Vaucanson was still more remarkable. It was of the size of life, and so perfect an imitation of the living animal that all the spectators were deceived. It executed, says Brewster, all the natural movements and gestures, it ate and drank with avidity, performed all the quick motions of the head and throat which are peculiar to the duck, and like it muddled the water which it drank with its bill. It produced also the sound of quacking in the most natural manner. In the anatomical structure the artists exhibited the highest skill. Every bone in the real duck had its representative in the automaton, and its wings were anatomically exact. Every cavity, apophysis, and curvature was imitated, and each bone executed its proper movements. When corn was thrown down before it, the duck stretched out its neck to pick it up, swallowed, and digested it.*

But if these machines were ingenious, what shall we think of the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage? What shall we think of an engine of wood and metal which can not only compute astronomical and navigation tables to any given extent, but render the exactitude of its operations mathematically certain through its power of correcting its possible errors? What shall we think of a machine which can not only accomplish all this, but actually print off its elaborate results, when obtained, without the slightest intervention of the intellect of man? It will perhaps be said, in reply, that a machine such as we have described is altogether above comparison with the Chess-Player of Maelzel. By no means—it is altogether beneath it—that is to say

* Under the head *Androides* in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia may be found a full account of the principal automata of ancient and modern times.

provided we assume (what should never for a moment be assumed) that the Chess-Player is a *pure machine*, and performs its operations without any immediate human agency. Arithmetical or algebraical calculations are, from their very nature, fixed and determinate. Certain *data* being given, certain results necessarily and inevitably follow. These results have dependence upon nothing, and are influenced by nothing but the *data* originally given. And the question to be solved proceeds, or should proceed, to its final determination by a succession of unerring steps liable to no change, and subject to no modification. This being the case, we can without difficulty conceive the *possibility* of so arranging a piece of mechanism, that upon starting it in accordance with the *data* of the question to be solved, it should continue its movements regularly, progressively, and undeviatingly, towards the required solution, since these movements, however complex, are never imagined to be otherwise than finite and determinate. But the case is widely different with the Chess-Player. With him there is no determinate progression. No one move in chess necessarily follows upon any one other. From no particular disposition of the men at one period of a game can we predicate their disposition at a different period. Let us place the *first move* in a game of chess in juxtaposition with the *data* of an algebraical question and their great difference will be immediately perceived. From the latter—from the *data*—the second step of the question, dependent thereupon, inevitably follows. It is modelled by the *data*. It must be *thus* and not otherwise. But from the first move in the game of chess no especial second move follows of necessity. In the algebraical question as it proceeds towards solution, the *certainty* of its operations remains altogether unimpaired. The second step having been a consequence of the *data*, the third step is equally a consequence of the second, the fourth of the third, the fifth of the fourth, and so on, *and not possibly otherwise*, to the end. But in proportion to the progress made in a game of chess is the *uncertainty* of each ensuing move. A few moves having been made, *no* step is certain. Different spectators of the game would

advise different moves. All is then dependent upon the variable judgment of the players. Now, even granting (what should not be granted) that the movements of the Automaton Chess-Player were in themselves determinate, they would be necessarily interrupted and disarranged by the indeterminate will of his antagonist. There is then no analogy whatever between the operations of the Chess-Player and those of the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage; and if we choose to call the former a *pure machine* we must be prepared to admit that it is, beyond all comparison, the most wonderful of the inventions of mankind. Its original projector, however, Baron Kempelen, had no scruple in declaring it to be a "very ordinary piece of mechanism—a *bagatelle* whose effects appeared so marvellous only from the boldness of the conception, and the fortunate choice of the methods adopted for promoting the illusion." But it is needless to dwell upon this point. It is quite certain that the operations of the Automaton are regulated by *mind*, and by nothing else. Indeed this matter is susceptible of a mathematical demonstration, *a priori*. The only question then is of the *manner* in which human agency is brought to bear. Before entering upon this subject it would be as well to give a brief history and description of the Chess-Player, for the benefit of such of our readers as may never have had an opportunity of witnessing Mr. Maelzel's exhibition.



The Automaton Chess-Player was invented in 1769 by Baron Kempelen, a nobleman of Presburg, in Hungary, who afterwards disposed of it, together with the secret of

its operations, to its present possessor.* Soon after its completion it was exhibited in Presburg, Paris, Vienna, and other Continental cities. In 1783 and 1784 it was taken to London by Mr. Maelzel. Of late years it has visited the principal towns in the United States. Wherever seen, the most intense curiosity was excited by its appearance, and numerous have been the attempts, by men of all classes, to fathom the mystery of its evolutions. The cut above gives a tolerable representation of the figure as seen by the citizens of Richmond a few weeks ago. The right arm, however, should lie more at length upon the box, a chess-board should appear upon it, and the cushion should not be seen while the pipe is held. Some immaterial alterations have been made in the costume of the player since it came into the possession of Maelzel—the plume, for example, was not originally worn.

At the hour appointed for exhibition a curtain is withdrawn, or folding-doors are thrown open, and the machine rolled to within about twelve feet of the nearest of the spectators, between whom and it (the machine) a rope is stretched. A figure is seen habited as a Turk, and seated, with its legs crossed, at a large box apparently of maple wood, which serves it as a table. The exhibitor will, if requested, roll the machine to any portion of the room, suffer it to remain altogether on any designated spot, or even shift its location repeatedly during the progress of a game. The bottom of the box is elevated considerably above the floor by means of the castors or brazen rollers on which it moves, a clear view of the surface immediately beneath the Automaton being thus afforded to the spectators. The chair on which the figure sits is affixed permanently to the box. On the top of this latter is a chess-board, also permanently affixed. The right arm of the Chess-Player is extended at full length before him, at right angles with his body, and lying, in an apparently careless position, by the side of

* This was written in 1835, when Mr. Maelzel was exhibiting the Chess-Player in the United States. It has since passed through the hands of several persons, and was again exhibited, some short time ago, in England.—*Editor.*

the board. The back of the hand is upwards. The board itself is eighteen inches square. The left arm of the figure is bent at the elbow, and in the left hand is a pipe. A green drapery conceals the back of the Turk, and falls partially over the front of both shoulders. To judge from the external appearance of the box, it is divided into five compartments—three cupboards of equal dimensions, and two drawers occupying that portion of the chest lying beneath the cupboards. The foregoing observations apply to the appearance of the Automaton upon its first introduction into the presence of the spectators.

Maelzel now informs the company that he will disclose to their view the mechanism of the machine. Taking from his pocket a bunch of keys he unlocks with one of them door marked 1 in the cut above, and throws the cupboard fully open to the inspection of all present. Its whole interior is apparently filled with wheels, pinions, levers, and other machinery, crowded very closely together, so that the eye can penetrate but a little distance into the mass. Leaving this door open to its full extent, he goes now round to the back of the box, and raising the drapery of the figure opens another door situated precisely in the rear of the one first opened. Holding a lighted candle at this door and shifting the position of the whole machine repeatedly at the same time, a bright light is thrown entirely through the cupboard, which is now clearly seen to be full, completely full, of machinery. The spectators being satisfied of this fact, Maelzel closes the back door, locks it, takes the key from the lock, lets fall the drapery of the figure, and comes round to the front. The door marked 1, it will be remembered, is still open. The exhibitor now proceeds to open the drawer which lies beneath the cupboards at the bottom of the box—for although there are apparently two drawers there is really only one, the two handles and two keyholes being intended merely for ornament. Having opened this drawer to its full extent a small cushion and a set of chess-men fixed in a framework made to support them perpendicularly are discovered. Leaving this drawer as well as cupboard No. 1 open, Maelzel now unlocks door No. 2 and door

No. 3, which are discovered to be folding-doors opening into one and the same compartment. To the right of this compartment, however (that is to say the spectators' right), a small division, six inches wide, and filled with machinery is partitioned off. The main compartment itself (in speaking of that portion of the box visible upon opening doors 2 and 3 we shall always call it the main compartment) is lined with dark cloth, and contains no machinery whatever beyond two pieces of steel, quadrant-shaped, and situated one in each of the rear top corners of the compartment. A small protuberance about eight inches square, and also covered with dark cloth, lies on the floor of the compartment near the rear corner on the spectators' left hand. Leaving doors No. 2 and No. 3 open, as well as the drawer and door No. 1, the exhibitor now goes round to the back of the main compartment, and unlocking another door there, displays clearly all the interior of the main compartment by introducing a candle behind it and within it. The whole box being thus apparently disclosed to the scrutiny of the company, Maelzel, still leaving the doors and drawer open, rolls the Automaton entirely round and exposes the back of the Turk by lifting up the drapery. A door about ten inches square is thrown open in the loins of the figure, and a smaller one also in the left thigh. The interior of the figure, as seen through these apertures, appears to be crowded with machinery. In general, every spectator is now thoroughly satisfied of having beheld and completely scrutinised, at one and the same time, every individual portion of the Automaton, and the idea of any person being concealed in the interior, during so complete an exhibition of that interior, if ever entertained, is immediately dismissed as preposterous in the extreme.

M. Maelzel, having rolled the machine back into its original position, now informs the company that the Automaton will play a game of chess with any one disposed to encounter him. This challenge being accepted, a small table is prepared for the antagonist, and placed close by the rope, but on the spectators' side of it, and so situated as not to prevent the company from obtaining a full view of the

Automaton. From a drawer in this table is taken a set of chess-men, and Maelzel arranges them generally, but not always, with his own hands on the chess-board, which consists merely of the usual number of squares painted upon the table. The antagonist having taken his seat, the exhibitor approaches the drawer of the box and takes therefrom the cushion, which, after removing the pipe from the hand of the Automaton, he places under its left arm as a support. Then taking also from the drawer the Automaton's set of chess-men he arranges them upon the chess-board before the figure. He now proceeds to close the doors and to lock them, leaving the bunch of keys in door No. 1. He also closes the drawer, and finally winds up the machine by applying a key to an aperture in the left end (the spectators' left) of the box. The game now commences —the Automaton taking the first move. The duration of the contest is usually limited to half-an-hour, but if it be not finished at the expiration of this period, and the antagonist still contend that he can beat the Automaton, M. Maelzel has seldom any objection to continue it. Not to weary the company is the ostensible and no doubt the real object of the limitation. It will of course be understood that when a move is made at his own table by the antagonist, the corresponding move is made at the box of the Automaton by Maelzel himself, who then acts as the representative of the antagonist. On the other hand, when the Turk moves the corresponding move is made at the table of the antagonist also by M. Maelzel, who then acts as the representative of the Automaton. In this manner it is necessary that the exhibitor should often pass from one table to the other. He also frequently goes in the rear of the figure to remove the chess-men which it has taken, and which it deposits when taken on the box to the left (to its own left) of the board. When the Automaton hesitates in relation to its move, the exhibiter is occasionally seen to place himself very near its right side and to lay his hand now and then in a careless manner upon the box. He has also a peculiar shuffle with his feet calculated to induce suspicion of collusion with the machine in minds

which are more cunning than sagacious. These peculiarities are no doubt mere mannerisms of M. Maelzel, or, if he is aware of them at all, he puts them in practice with a view of exciting in the spectators a false idea of the pure mechanism in the Automaton.

The Turk plays with his left hand. All the movements of the arm are at right angles. In this manner the hand (which is gloved and bent in a natural way) being brought directly above the piece to be moved, descends finally upon it, the fingers receiving it in most cases without difficulty. Occasionally, however, when the piece is not precisely in its proper situation, the Automaton fails in his attempt at seizing it. When this occurs no second effort is made, but the arm continues its movement in the direction originally intended, precisely as if the piece were in the fingers. Having thus designated the spot whither the move should have been made, the arm returns to its cushion, and Maelzel performs the evolution which the Automaton pointed out. At every movement of the figure machinery is heard in motion. During the progress of the game the figure now and then rolls its eyes as if surveying the board, moves its head, and pronounces the word *echec* (check) when necessary.* If a false move be made by his antagonist, he raps briskly on the box with the fingers of his right hand, shakes his head roughly, and replacing the piece falsely moved in its former situation, assumes the next move himself. Upon winning the game he waves his head with an air of triumph, looks around complacently upon the spectators, and drawing his left arm further back than usual, suffers his fingers alone to rest upon the cushion. In general the Turk is victorious —once or twice he has been beaten. The game being ended, Maelzel will again, if desired, exhibit the mechanism of the box in the same manner as before. The machine is then rolled back, and a curtain hides it from the view of the company.

There have been many attempts at solving the mystery

* The making the Turk pronounce the word *echec* is an improvement by M. Maelzel. When in possession of Baron Kempelen the figure indicated a *check* by rapping on the box with his right hand.

of the Automaton. The most general opinion in relation to it, an opinion too not unfrequently adopted by men who should have known better, was, as we have before said, that no immediate human agency was employed—in other words, that the machine was purely a machine and nothing else. Many, however, maintained that the exhibiter himself regulated the movements of the figure by mechanical means operating through the feet of the box. Others, again, spoke confidently of a magnet. Of the first of these opinions we shall say nothing at present more than we have already said. In relation to the second it is only necessary to repeat what we have before stated, that the machine is rolled about on castors, and will, at the request of a spectator, be moved to and fro to any portion of the room, even during the progress of the game. The supposition of the magnet is also untenable—for if a magnet were the agent, any other magnet in the pocket of a spectator would disarrange the entire mechanism. The exhibiter, however, will suffer the most powerful loadstone to remain even upon the box during the whole of the exhibition.

The first attempt at a written explanation of the secret, at least the first attempt of which we ourselves have any knowledge, was made in a large pamphlet printed at Paris in 1785. The author's hypothesis amounted to this—that a dwarf actuated the machine. This dwarf he supposed to conceal himself during the opening of the box by thrusting his legs into two hollow cylinders, which were represented to be (but which are not) among the machinery in the cupboard No. 1, while his body was out of the box entirely, and covered by the drapery of the Turk. When the doors were shut, the dwarf was enabled to bring his body within the box—the noise produced by some portion of the machinery allowing him to do so unheard, and also to close the door by which he entered. The interior of the automaton being then exhibited, and no person discovered, the spectators, says the author of this pamphlet, are satisfied that no one is within any portion of the machine. The whole hypothesis was too obviously absurd to require com-

ment or refutation, and accordingly we find that it attracted very little attention.

In 1789 a book was published at Dresden by M. I. F. Freyhere, in which another endeavour was made to unravel the mystery. Mr. Freyhere's book was a pretty large one, and copiously illustrated by coloured engravings. His supposition was that "a well-taught boy very thin and tall of his age (sufficiently so that he could be concealed in a drawer almost immediately under the chess-board)" played the game of chess and effected all the evolutions of the Automaton. This idea, although even more silly than that of the Parisian author, met with a better reception, and was in some measure believed to be the true solution of the wonder, until the inventor put an end to the discussion by suffering a close examination of the top of the box.

These bizarre attempts at explanation were followed by others equally bizarre. Of late years, however, an anonymous writer, by a course of reasoning exceedingly unphilosophical, has contrived to blunder upon a plausible solution —although we cannot consider it altogether the true one. His Essay was first published in a Baltimore weekly paper, was illustrated by cuts, and was entitled "An attempt to analyse the Automaton Chess-Player of M. Maelzel." This Essay we suppose to have been the original of the *pamphlet* to which Sir David Brewster alludes in his "Letters on Natural Magic," and which he has no hesitation in declaring a thorough and satisfactory explanation. The *results* of the analysis are undoubtedly, in the main, just; but we can only account for Brewster's pronouncing the Essay a thorough and satisfactory explanation by supposing him to have bestowed upon it a very cursory and inattentive perusal. In the compendium of the Essay, made use of in the "Letters on Natural Magic," it is quite impossible to arrive at any distinct conclusion in regard to the adequacy or inadequacy of the analysis, on account of the gross misarrangement and deficiency of the letters of reference employed. The same fault is to be found in the "Attempt," etc., as we originally saw it. The solution consists in a series of minute explanations (accompanied by woodcuts, the whole

occupying many pages), in which the object is to show the *possibility* of *so shifting the partitions* of the box as to allow a human being, concealed in the interior, to move portions of his body from one part of the box to another during the exhibition of the mechanism—thus eluding the scrutiny of the spectators. There can be no doubt, as we have before observed, and as we will presently endeavour to show, that the principle, or rather the result, of this solution is the true one. Some person *is* concealed in the box during the whole time of exhibiting the interior. We object, however, to the whole verbose description of the *manner* in which the partitions are shifted, to accommodate the movements of the person concealed. We object to it as a mere theory assumed in the first place, and to which circumstances are afterwards made to adapt themselves. It was not, and could not have been, arrived at by any inductive reasoning. In whatever way the shifting is managed, it is of course concealed at every step from observation. To show that certain movements might possibly be effected in a certain way, is very far from showing that they are actually so effected. There may be an infinity of other methods by which the same results may be obtained. The probability of the one assumed proving the correct one is then as unity to infinity. But, in reality, this particular point, the shifting of the partitions, is of no consequence whatever. It was altogether unnecessary to devote seven or eight pages for the purpose of proving what no one in his senses would deny—viz. that the wonderful mechanical genius of Baron Kempelen could invent the necessary means for shutting a door or slipping aside a panel, with a human agent too at his service in actual contact with the panel or the door, and the whole operations carried on, as the author of the Essay himself shows, and as we shall attempt to show more fully hereafter, entirely out of reach of the observation of the spectators.

In attempting ourselves an explanation of the Automaton, we will, in the first place, endeavour to show how its operations are effected, and afterwards describe, as briefly as

possible, the nature of the *observations* from which we have deduced our result.

It will be necessary, for a proper understanding of the subject, that we repeat here in a few words the routine adopted by the exhibiter in disclosing the interior of the box—a routine from which he *never* deviates in any material particular. In the first place he opens the door No. 1. Leaving this open, he goes round to the rear of the box, and opens a door precisely at the back of door No. 1. To this back door he holds a lighted candle. He then *closes the back door*, locks it, and, coming round to the front, opens the drawer to its full extent. This done, he opens the doors No. 2 and No. 3 (the folding-doors), and displays the interior of the main compartment. Leaving open the main compartment, the drawer, and the front door of cupboard No. 1, he now goes to the rear again, and throws open the back door of the main compartment. In shutting up the box no particular order is observed, except that the folding-doors are always closed before the drawer.

Now, let us suppose that when the machine is first rolled into the presence of the spectators a man is already within it. His body is situated behind the dense machinery in cupboard No. 1, (the rear portion of which machinery is so contrived as to slip *en masse*, from the main compartment to the cupboard No. 1, as occasion may require), and his legs lie at full length in the main compartment. When Maelzel opens the door No. 1 the man within is not in any danger of discovery, for the keenest eye cannot penetrate more than about two inches into the darkness within. But the case is otherwise when the back door of the cupboard No. 1 is opened. A bright light then pervades the cupboard, and the body of the man would be discovered if it were there. But it is not. The putting the key in the lock of the back door was a signal on hearing which the person concealed brought his body forward to an angle as acute as possible—throwing it altogether, or nearly so, into the main compartment. This, however, is a painful position, and cannot be long maintained. Accordingly we find that Maelzel *closes the back door*. This being done, there is

no reason why the body of the man may not resume its former situation—for the cupboard is again so dark as to defy scrutiny. The drawer is now opened, and the legs of the person within drop down behind it in the space it formerly occupied.* There is, consequently, now no longer any part of the man in the main compartment—his body being behind the machinery in cupboard No. 1, and his legs in the space occupied by the drawer. The exhibitor therefore finds himself at liberty to display the main compartment. This he does—opening both its back and front doors—and no person is discovered. The spectators are now satisfied that the whole of the box is exposed to view—and exposed too, all portions of it at one and the same time. But of course this is not the case. They neither see the space behind the drawer, nor the interior of cupboard No. 1—the front door of which latter the exhibiter virtually shuts in shutting its back door. Maelzel, having now rolled the machine around, lifted up the drapery of the Turk, opened the doors in his back and thigh, and shown his trunk to be full of machinery, brings the whole back into its original position, and closes the doors. The man within is now at liberty to move about. He gets up into the body of the Turk just so high as to bring his eyes above the level of the chess-board. It is very probable that he seats himself upon the little square block or protuberance which is seen in a corner of the main compartment when the doors are open. In this position he sees the chess-board through the bosom of the Turk, which is of gauze. Bringing his right arm across his breast he actuates the little machinery necessary to guide the left arm and the fingers of the figure. This machinery is situated just beneath the left shoulder of the Turk, and is consequently easily reached by the right

* Sir David Brewster supposes that there is always a large space behind this drawer even when shut—in other words that the drawer is a "false drawer," and does not extend to the back of the box. But the idea is altogether untenable. So commonplace a trick would be immediately discovered—especially as the drawer is always opened to its full extent, and an opportunity thus offered of comparing its depth with that of the box

hand of the man concealed, if we suppose his right arm brought across the breast. The motions of the head and eyes, and of the right arm of the figure, as well as the sound *echec*, are produced by other mechanism in the interior, and actuated at will by the man within. The whole of this mechanism—that is to say all the mechanism essential to the machine—is most probably contained within the little cupboard (of about six inches in breadth) partitioned off at the right (the spectators' right) of the main compartment.

In this analysis of the operations of the Automaton, we have purposely avoided any allusion to the manner in which the partitions are shifted, and it will now be readily comprehended that this point is a matter of no importance, since, by mechanism within the ability of any common carpenter, it might be effected in an infinity of different ways, and since we have shown that, however performed, it is performed out of the view of the spectators. Our result is founded upon the following *observations* taken during frequent visits to the exhibition of Maelzel.*

1. The moves of the Turk are not made at regular intervals of time, but accommodate themselves to the moves of the antagonist—although this point (of regularity), so important in all kinds of mechanical contrivance, might have been readily brought about by limiting the time allowed for the moves of the antagonist. For example, if this limit were three minutes, the moves of the Automaton might be made at any given intervals longer than three minutes. The fact then of irregularity, when regularity might have been so easily attained, goes to prove that regularity is unimportant to the action of the Automaton—in other words, that the Automaton is not a *pure machine.*

2. When the Automaton is about to move a piece, a distinct motion is observable just beneath the left shoulder,

* Some of these *observations* are intended merely to prove that the machine must be regulated *by mind*, and it may be thought a work of supererogation to advance further arguments in support of what has been already fully decided. But our object is to convince, in especial, certain of our friends upon whom a train of suggestive reasoning will have more influence than the most positive *a priori* demonstration.

and which motion agitates in a slight degree the drapery covering the front of the left shoulder. This motion invariably precedes, by about two seconds, the movement of the arm itself—and the arm never, in any instance, moves without this preparatory motion in the shoulder. Now let the antagonist move a piece, and let the corresponding move be made by Maelzel, as usual, upon the board of the Automaton. Then let the antagonist narrowly watch the Automaton, until he detect the preparatory motion in the shoulder. Immediately upon detecting this motion, and before the arm itself begins to move, let him withdraw his piece, as if perceiving an error in his manœuvre. It will then be seen that the movement of the arm, which in all other cases, immediately succeeds the motion in the shoulder, is withheld—is not made—although Maelzel has not yet performed, on the board of the Automaton, any move corresponding to the withdrawal of the antagonist. In this case, that the Automaton was about to move is evident—and that he did not move was an effect plainly produced by the withdrawal of the antagonist, and without any intervention of Maelzel.

This fact fully proves—1, that the intervention of Maelzel, in performing the moves of the antagonist on the board of the Automaton, is not essential to the movements of the Automaton; 2, that its movements are regulated by *mind* by some person who sees the board of the antagonist; 3, that its movements are not regulated by the mind of Maelzel, whose back was turned towards the antagonist at the withdrawal of his move.

3. The Automaton does not invariably win the game. Were the machine a pure machine this would not be the case—it would always win. The *principle* being discovered by which a machine can be made to *play* a game of chess, an extension of the same principle would enable it to *win* a game—a further extension would enable it to *win all* games—that is, to gain any possible game of an antagonist. A little consideration will convince any one that the difficulty of making a machine win all games is not in the least degree greater, as regards the principle of the operations

necessary, than that of making it win a single game. If then we regard the Chess-Player as a machine, we must suppose (what is highly improbable) that its inventor preferred leaving it incomplete to perfecting it—a supposition rendered still more absurd when we reflect that the leaving it incomplete would afford an argument against the possibility of its being a pure machine—the very argument we now adduce.

4. When the situation of the game is difficult or complex we never perceive the Turk either shake his head or roll his eyes. It is only when his next move is obvious, or when the game is so circumstanced that to a man in the Automaton's place there would be no necessity for reflection. Now these peculiar movements of the head and eyes are movements customary with persons engaged in meditation, and the ingenious Baron Kempelen would have adapted these movements (were the machine a pure machine) to occasions proper for their display—that is, to occasions of complexity. But the reverse is seen to be the case, and this reverse applies precisely to our supposition of a man in the interior. When engaged in meditation about the game he has no time to think of setting in motion the mechanism of the Automaton by which are moved the head and the eyes. When the game, however, is obvious, he has time to look about him, and, accordingly, we see the head shake and the eyes roll.

5. When the machine is rolled round to allow the spectators an examination of the back of the Turk, and when his drapery is lifted up and the doors in the trunk and thigh thrown open, the interior of the trunk is seen to be crowded with machinery. In scrutinising this machinery while the Automaton was in motion, that is to say, while the whole machine was moving on the castors, it appeared to us that certain portions of the mechanism changed their shape and position in a degree too great to be accounted for by the simple laws of perspective; and subsequent examinations convinced us that these undue alterations were attributable to mirrors in the interior of the trunk. The introduction of mirrors among the machinery could not have been in-

tended to influence, in any degree, the machinery itself. Their operation, whatever that operation should prove to be, must necessarily have reference to the eye of the spectator. We at once concluded that these mirrors were so placed to multiply to the vision some few pieces of machinery within the trunk, so as to give it the appearance of being crowded with mechanism. Now the direct inference from this is that the machine is not a pure machine. For if it were, the inventor, so far from wishing its mechanism to appear complex, and using deception for the purpose of giving it this appearance, would have been especially desirous of convincing those who witnessed his exhibition, of the *simplicity* of the means by which results so wonderful were brought about.

6. The external appearance, and especially the deportment of the Turk, are, when we consider them as imitations of *life*, but very indifferent imitations. The countenance evinces no ingenuity, and is surpassed, in its resemblance to the human face, by the very commonest of wax-works. The eyes roll unnaturally in the head, without any corresponding motions of the lids or brows. The arm, particularly, performs its operations in an exceedingly stiff, awkward, jerking, and rectangular manner. Now, all this is the result either of inability in Maelzel to do better, or of intentional neglect—accidental neglect being out of the question when we consider that the whole time of the ingenious proprietor is occupied in the improvement of his machines. Most assuredly we must not refer the unlife-like appearances to inability—for all the rest of Maelzel's automata are evidence of his full ability to copy the motions and peculiarities of life with the most wonderful exactitude. The rope-dancers, for example, are inimitable. When the clown laughs, his lips, his eyes, his eye-brows and eye-lids—indeed, all the features of his countenance—are imbued with their appropriate expressions. In both him and his companion every gesture is so entirely easy, and free from the semblance of artificiality, that, were it not for the diminutiveness of their size, and the fact of their being passed from one spectator to another previous to their exhibition on the rope, it would

be difficult to convince any assemblage of persons that these wooden automata were not living creatures. We cannot, therefore, doubt Mr. Maelzel's ability, and we must necessarily suppose that he intentionally suffered his Chess-Player to remain the same artificial and unnatural figure which Baron Kempelen (no doubt also through design) originally made it. What this design was it is not difficult to conceive. Were the Automaton life-like in its motions, the spectator would be more apt to attribute its operations to their true cause (that is, to human agency within) than he is now, when the awkward and rectangular manœuvres convey the idea of pure and unaided mechanism.

7. When, a short time previous to the commencement of the game, the Automaton is wound up by the exhibiter as usual, an ear in any degree accustomed to the sounds produced in winding up a system of machinery, will not fail to discover instantaneously that the axis turned by the key in the box of the Chess-Player cannot possibly be connected with either a weight, a spring, or any system of machinery whatever. The inference here is the same as in our last observation. The winding up is inessential to the operations of the Automaton, and is performed with the design of exciting in the spectators the false idea of mechanism.

8. When the question is demanded explicitly of Maelzel —"Is the Automaton a pure machine or not?" his reply is invariably the same—"I will say nothing about it." Now the notoriety of the Automaton, and the great curiosity it has everywhere excited, are owing more especially to the prevalent opinion that it *is* a pure machine than to any other circumstance. Of course, then, it is the interest of the proprietor to represent it as a pure machine. And what more obvious and more effectual method could there be of impressing the spectators with this desired idea than a positive and explicit declaration to that effect? On the other hand, what more obvious and effectual method could there be of exciting a disbelief in the Automaton's being a pure machine than by withholding such explicit declaration? For people will naturally reason thus,—It is Maelzel's interest to represent this thing a pure machine—

he refuses to do so, directly, in words, although he does not scruple, and is evidently anxious to do so, indirectly by actions—were it actually what he wishes to represent it by actions he would gladly avail himself of the more direct testimony of words—the inference is, that a consciousness of its *not* being a pure machine is the reason of his silence—his actions cannot implicate him in a falsehood—his words may.

9. When, in exhibiting the interior of the box, Maelzel has thrown open the door No. 1, and also the door immediately behind it, he holds a lighted candle at the back door (as mentioned above), and moves the entire machine to and fro with a view of convincing the company that the cupboard No. 1 is entirely filled with machinery. When the machine is thus moved about, it will be apparent to any careful observer that whereas that portion of the machinery near the front door No. 1 is perfectly steady and unwavering, the portion farther within fluctuates, in a very slight degree, with the movements of the machine. This circumstance first aroused in us the suspicion that the more remote portion of the machinery was so arranged as to be easily slipped, *en masse*, from its position when occasion should require it. This occasion we have already stated to occur when the man concealed within brings his body into an erect position upon the closing of the back door.

10. Sir David Brewster states the figure of the Turk to be of the size of life—but in fact it is far above the ordinary size. Nothing is more easy than to err in our notions of magnitude. The body of the Automaton is generally insulated, and, having no means of immediately comparing it with any human form, we suffer ourselves to consider it as of ordinary dimensions. This mistake may, however, be corrected by observing the Chess-Player when, as is sometimes the case, the exhibiter approaches it. Mr. Maelzel, to be sure, is not very tall, but upon drawing near the machine, his head will be found at least eighteen inches below the head of the Turk, although the latter, it will be remembered, is in a sitting position.

11. The box behind which the Automaton is placed is

precisely three feet six inches long, two feet four inches deep, and two feet six inches high. These dimensions are fully sufficient for the accommodation of a man very much above the common size—and the main compartment alone is capable of holding any ordinary man in the position we have mentioned as assumed by the person concealed. As these are facts, which any one who doubts them may prove by actual calculation, we deem it unnecessary to dwell upon them. We will only suggest that, although the top of the box is apparently a board of about three inches in thickness, the spectator may satisfy himself by stooping and looking up at it when the main compartment is open, that it is in reality very thin. The height of the drawer also will be misconceived by those who examine it in a cursory manner. There is a space of about three inches between the top of the drawer as seen from the exterior, and the bottom of the cupboard—a space which must be included in the height of the drawer. These contrivances to make the room within the box appear less than it actually is, are referrible to a design on the part of the inventor to impress the company again with a false idea—viz., that no human being can be accommodated within the box.

12. The interior of the main compartment is lined throughout with *cloth*. This cloth we suppose to have a twofold object. A portion of it may form, when tightly stretched, the only partitions which there is any necessity for removing during the changes of the man's position—viz., the partition between the rear of the main compartment and the rear of cupboard No. 1, and the partition between the main compartment and the space behind the drawer when open. If we imagine this to be the case, the difficulty of shifting the partitions vanishes at once, if indeed any such difficulty could be supposed under any circumstances to exist. The second object of the cloth is to deaden and render indistinct all sounds occasioned by the movements of the person within.

13. The antagonist (as we have before observed) is not suffered to play at the board of the Automaton, but is seated at some distance from the machine. The reason which,

most probably, would be assigned for this circumstance, if the question were demanded, is, that were the antagonist otherwise situated, his person would intervene between the machine and the spectators, and preclude the latter from a distinct view. But this difficulty might be easily obviated, either by elevating the seats of the company, or by turning the end of the box towards them during the game. The true cause of the restriction is perhaps very different. Were the antagonist seated in contact with the box, the secret would be liable to discovery, by his detecting, with the aid of a quick ear, the breathings of the man concealed.

14. Although M. Maelzel, in disclosing the interior of the machine sometimes slightly deviates from the *routine* which we have pointed out, yet *never* in any instance does he *so* deviate from it as to interfere with our solution. For example, he has been known to open first of all the drawer —but he never opens the main compartment without first closing the back door of cupboard No. 1—he never opens the main compartment without first pulling out the drawer —he never shuts the drawer without first shutting the main compartment—he never opens the back door of cupboard No. 1 while the main compartment is open—and the game of chess is never commenced until the whole machine is closed. Now if it were observed that *never*, *in any single instance*, did M. Maelzel differ from the routine we have pointed out as necessary to our solution, it would be one of the strongest possible arguments in corroboration of it—but the argument becomes infinitely strengthened if we duly consider the circumstance that he *does occasionally* deviate from the routine, but never does *so* deviate as to falsify the solution.

15. There are six candles on the board of the Automaton during exhibition. The question naturally arises—"Why are so many employed, when a single candle, or at furthest two, would have been amply sufficient to afford the spectators a clear view of the board, in a room otherwise so well lit up as the exhibition room always is—when, moreover, if we suppose the machine a *pure machine*, there can be no necessity for so much light, or indeed any light at all, to

enable *it* to perform its operations—and when especially, only a single candle is placed upon the table of the antagonist?" The first and most obvious inference is that so strong a light is requisite to enable the man within to see through the transparent material (probably fine gauze) of which the breast of the Turk is composed. But when we consider the *arrangement* of the candles, another reason immediately presents itself. There are six lights (as we have said before) in all. Three of these are on each side of the figure. These most remote from the spectators are the longest—those in the middle are about two inches shorter—and those nearest the company about two inches shorter still—and the candles on one side differ in height from the candles respectively opposite on the other, by a ratio different from two inches—that is to say, the longest candle on one side is about three inches shorter than the longest candle on the other, and so on. Thus it will be seen that no two of the candles are of the same height, and thus also the difficulty of ascertaining the *material* of the breast of the figure (against which the light is especially directed) is greatly augmented by the dazzling effect of the complicated crossings of the rays—crossings which are brought about by placing the centres of radiation all upon different levels.

16. While the Chess-Player was in possession of Baron Kempelen, it was more than once observed, first, that an Italian in the suite of the Baron was never visible during the playing of a game at chess by the Turk, and, secondly, that the Italian being taken seriously ill, the exhibition was suspended until his recovery. This Italian professed a *total* ignorance of the game of chess, although all others of the suite played well. Similar observations have been made since the Automaton has been purchased by Maelzel. There is a man *Schlumberger*, who attends him wherever he goes, but who has no ostensible occupation other than that of assisting in the packing and unpacking of the Automaton. This man is about the medium size, and has a remarkable stoop in the shoulders. Whether he professes to play chess or not, we are not informed. It is quite certain, however,

that he is never to be seen during the exhibition of the Chess-Player, although frequently visible just before and just after the exhibition. Moreover, some years ago Maelzel visited Richmond with his automata, and exhibited them, we believe, in the house now occupied by M. Bossieux as a Dancing Academy. *Schlumberger* was suddenly taken ill, and during his illness there was no exhibition of the Chess-Player. These facts are well known to many of our citizens. The reason assigned for the suspension of the Chess-Player's performances, was *not* the illness of *Schlumberger*. The inferences from all this we leave, without farther comment, to the reader.

17. The Turk plays with his *left* arm. A circumstance so remarkable cannot be accidental. Brewster takes no notice of it whatever, beyond a mere statement, we believe, that such is the fact. The early writers of treatises on the Automaton seem not to have observed the matter at all, and have no reference to it. The author of the pamphlet alluded to by Brewster mentions it, but acknowledges his inability to account for it. Yet it is obviously from such prominent discrepancies or incongruities as this that deductions are to be made (if made at all) which shall lead us to the truth.

The circumstance of the Automaton's playing with his left hand cannot have connection with the operations of the machine considered merely as such. Any mechanical arrangement which would cause the figure to move, in any given manner, the left arm—could, if reversed, cause it to move, in the same manner, the right. But these principles cannot be extended to the human organisation, wherein there is a marked and radical difference in the construction, and at all events, in the powers, of the right and left arms. Reflecting upon this latter fact, we naturally refer the incongruity noticeable in the Chess-Player to this peculiarity in the human organisation. If so, we must imagine some *reversion*—for the Chess-Player plays precisely as a man *would not*. These ideas once entertained are sufficient of themselves, to suggest the notion of a man in the interior. a few more imperceptible steps lead us, finally, to the result.

The Automaton plays with his left arm, because under no other circumstances could the man within play with his right—a *desideratum* of course. Let us for example, imagine the Automaton to play with his right arm. To reach the machinery which moves the arm, and which we have before explained to lie just beneath the shoulder, it would be necessary for the man within either to use his right arm in an exceedingly painful and awkward position (viz., brought up close to his body and tightly compressed between his body and the side of the Automaton), or else to use his left arm brought across his breast. In neither case could he act with the requisite ease or precision. On the contrary, the Automaton playing, as it actually does, with the left arm, all difficulties vanish. The right arm of the man within is brought across his breast, and his right fingers act without any constraint upon the machinery in the shoulder of the figure.

We do not believe that any reasonable objections can be urged against this solution of the Automaton Chess-Player.

LETTER TO B——*.

It has been said that a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself. This, according to *your* idea and *mine* of poetry, I feel to be false—the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse. On this account, and because there are but few B——'s in the world, I would be as much ashamed of the world's good opinion as proud of your own. Another than yourself might here observe, "Shakspeare is in possession of the world's good opinion, and yet Shakspeare is the greatest of poets. It appears then that the world judge correctly, why should you be ashamed of their favourable judgment?" The difficulty lies in the interpretation of the word "judgment" or "opinion." The opinion is the world's, truly, but it may be called theirs as a man would call a book his, having bought it; he did not write the book, but it is his; they did not originate the opinion, but it is theirs. A fool, for example, thinks Shakspeare a great poet—yet the fool has never read Shakspeare. But the fool's neighbour, who is a step higher on the Andes of the mind, whose head (that is to say, his more exalted thought), is too far above the fool to be seen or understood, but whose feet (by which I mean his every-day actions) are sufficiently near to be discerned, and by means of which that superiority is ascertained, which *but* for them would never have been discovered—this neighbour asserts that Shakspeare is a great poet—the fool believes him, and it is henceforward his *opinion*. This neighbour's own opinion has, in like manner, been adopted from one above *him*, and so, ascendingly, to a few gifted individuals who kneel around the summit, beholding, face to face, the master spirit who stands upon the pinnacle. . . .

* Printed, with the following note, in the second volume of the "Southern Literary Messenger:" "These detached passages form part of the preface to a small volume printed some years ago for private circulation. They have vigour and much originality—but of course we shall not be called upon to endorse all the writer's opinions."

You are aware of the great barrier in the path of an American writer. He is read, if at all, in preference to the combined and established wit of the world. I say established; for it is with literature as with law or empire—an established name is an estate in tenure, or a throne in possession. Besides, one might suppose that books, like their authors, improve by travel—their having crossed the sea is, with us, so great a distinction. Our antiquaries abandon time for distance; our very fops glance from the binding to the bottom of the title-page, where the mystic characters which spell London, Paris, or Genoa, are precisely so many letters of recommendation.

I mentioned just now a vulgar error as regards criticism. I think the notion that no poet can form a correct estimate of his own writings is another. I remarked before that in proportion to the poetical talent would be the justice of a critique upon poetry. Therefore a bad poet would, I grant, make a false critique, and his self-love would infallibly bias his little judgment in his favour; but a poet, who is indeed a poet, could not, I think, fail of making a just critique, whatever should be deducted on the score of self-love might be replaced on account of his intimate acquaintance with the subject; in short, we have more instances of false criticism than of just where one's own writings are the test, simply because we have more bad poets than good. There are of course many objections to what I say: Milton is a great example of the contrary; but his opinion with respect to the "Paradise Regained" is by no means fairly ascertained. By what trivial circumstances men are often led to assert what they do not really believe! Perhaps an inadvertent word has descended to posterity. But, in fact, the "Paradise Regained" is little, if at all, inferior to the "Paradise Lost," and is only supposed so to be because men do not like epics, whatever they may say to the contrary, and reading those of Milton in their natural order, are too much wearied with the first to derive any pleasure from the second.

I dare say Milton preferred Comus to either—if so—justly. . .

As I am speaking of poetry, it will not be amiss to

touch slightly upon the most singular heresy in its modern history—the heresy of what is called, very foolishly, the Lake School. Some years ago I might have been induced, by an occasion like the present, to attempt a formal refutation of their doctrine; at present it would be a work of supererogation. The wise must bow to the wisdom of such men as Coleridge and Southey, but being wise, have laughed at poetical theories so prosaically exemplified.

Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writings*—but it required a Wordsworth to pronounce it the most metaphysical. He seems to think that the end of poetry is, or should be instruction—yet it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness; if so, the end of every separate part of our existence—everything connected with our existence should be still happiness. Therefore the end of instruction should be happiness; and happiness is another name for pleasure; —therefore the end of instruction should be pleasure: yet we see the above-mentioned opinion implies precisely the reverse.

To proceed: *ceteris paribus*, he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow-men than he who instructs, since utility is happiness, and pleasure is the end already obtained which instruction is merely the means of obtaining.

I see no reason, then, why our metaphysical poets should plume themselves so much on the utility of their works, unless indeed they refer to instruction with eternity in view; in which case, sincere respect for their piety would not allow me to express my contempt for their judgment; contempt which it would be difficult to conceal, since their writings are professedly to be understood by the few, and it is the many who stand in need of salvation. In such case I should no doubt be tempted to think of the devil in Melmoth, who labours indefatigably, through three octavo volumes, to accomplish the destruction of one or two souls, while any common devil would have demolished one or two thousand. . . .

Against the subtleties which would make poetry a study

* Spoudiotaton kai philosophikotaton genos.

—not a passion—it becomes the metaphysician to reason—but the poet to protest. Yet Wordsworth and Coleridge are men in years; the one imbued in contemplation from his childhood, the other a giant in intellect and learning. The diffidence, then, with which I venture to dispute their authority would be overwhelming did I not feel, from the bottom of my heart, that learning has little to do with the imagination—intellect with the passions—or age with poetry. . . .

> "Trifles, like straws, upon the surface flow,
> He who would search for pearls must dive below,"

are lines which have done much mischief. As regards the greater truths, men oftener err by seeking them at the bottom than at the top; the depth lies in the huge abysses where wisdom is sought—not in the palpable palaces where she is found. The ancients were not always right in hiding the goddess in a well; witness the light which Bacon has thrown upon philosophy; witness the principles of our divine faith—that moral mechanism by which the simplicity of a child may overbalance the wisdom of a man.

We see an instance of Coleridge's liability to err, in his "Biographia Literaria"—professedly his literary life and opinions, but, in fact, a treatise *de omni scibili et quibusdam aliis*. He goes wrong by reason of his very profundity, and of his error we have a natural type in the contemplation of a star. He who regards it directly and intensely sees, it is true, the star, but it is the star without a ray—while he who surveys it less inquisitively is conscious of all for which the star is useful to us below—its brilliancy and its beauty. . . .

As to Wordsworth, I have no faith in him. That he had in youth the feelings of a poet I believe—for there are glimpses of extreme delicacy in his writings—(and delicacy is the poet's own kingdom—his *El Dorado*)—but they have the appearance of a better day recollected; and glimpses, at best, are little evidence of present poetic fire—we know that a few straggling flowers spring up daily in the crevices of the glacier.

He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contem-

plation with the end of poetising in his manhood. With the increase of his judgment the light which should make it apparent has faded away. His judgment consequently is too correct. This may not be understood,—but the old Goths of Germany would have understood it, who used to debate matters of importance to their State twice, once when drunk, and once when sober—sober that they might not be deficient in formality—drunk lest they should be destitute of vigour.

The long wordy discussions by which he tries to reason us into admiration of his poetry speak very little in his favour: they are full of such assertions as this (I have opened one of his volumes at random)—"Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before"—indeed? then it follows that in doing what is *un*worthy to be done, or what *has* been done before, no genius can be evinced; yet the picking of pockets is an unworthy act, pockets have been picked time immemorial, and Barrington, the pick-pocket, in point of genius, would have thought hard of a comparison with William Wordsworth, the poet.

Again—in estimating the merit of certain poems, whether they be Ossian's or M'Pherson's can surely be of little consequence, yet, in order to prove their worthlessness, Mr. W. has expended many pages in the controversy. *Tantœne animis?* Can great minds descend to such absurdity? But worse still: that he may bear down every argument in favour of these poems, he triumphantly drags forward a passage, in his abomination of which he expects the reader to sympathise. It is the beginning of the epic poem "*Temora.*" "The blue waves of Ullin roll in light; the green hills are covered with day; trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze." And this—this gorgeous, yet simple imagery, where all is alive and panting with immortality—this, William Wordsworth, the author of "Peter Bell," has *selected* for his contempt. We shall see what better he, in his own person, has to offer. Imprimis:

> "And now she's at the pony's head,
> And now she's at the pony's tail,

On that side now, and now on this,
And almost stifled her with bliss—
A few sad tears does Betty shed,
She pats the pony where or when
She knows not: happy Betty Foy!
O, Johnny! never mind the Doctor!"

Secondly:

"The dew was falling fast, the—stars began to blink,
I heard a voice it said—drink, pretty creature, drink;
And, looking o'er the hedge, be—fore me I espied
A snow-white mountain lamb, with a—maiden at its side.
No other sheep were near, the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was—tether'd to a stone."

Now, we have no doubt this is all true: we *will* believe it, indeed, we will, Mr. W. Is it sympathy for the sheep you wish to excite? I love a sheep from the bottom of my heart.

But there *are* occasions, dear B——, there are occasions when even Wordsworth is reasonable. Even Stamboul, it is said, shall have an end, and the most unlucky blunders must come to a conclusion. Here is an extract from his preface—

"Those who have been accustomed to the phraseology of modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to a conclusion (*impossible!*) will, no doubt, have to struggle with feelings of awkwardness; (ha! ha! ha!) they will look round for poetry (ha! ha! ha! ha!), and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts have been permitted to assume that title." Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Yet, let not Mr. W. despair; he has given immortality to a waggon, and the bee Sophocles has transmitted to eternity a sore toe, and dignified a tragedy with a chorus of turkeys.

Of Coleridge, I cannot speak but with reverence. His towering intellect! his gigantic power! He is one more evidence of the fact "que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu'elles nient." He has imprisoned his own conceptions by the barrier he has erected against those of others

It is lamentable to think that such a mind should be buried in metaphysics, and, like the Nyctanthes, waste its perfume upon the night alone. In reading his poetry, I tremble like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below.

What is Poetry?—Poetry! that Proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! "Give me," I demanded of a scholar some time ago, "give me a definition of poetry." "Très-volontiers;" and he proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakspeare! I imagine to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, dear B——, think of poetry, and then think of Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairy-like, and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then—and then think of the Tempest—the Midsummer Night's Dream—Prospero—Oberon—and Titania!

A poem, in my opinion, is opposed to a work of science by having, for its *immediate* object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having, for its object, an *indefinite* instead of a *definite* pleasure, being a poem only so far as this object is attained; romance presenting perceptible images with definite, poetry with *in*definite sensations, to which end music is an *essential*, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music, without the idea, is simply music; the idea, without the music, is prose, from its very definitiveness.

What was meant by the invective against him who had no music in his soul?

To sum up this long rigmarole, I have dear B——, what you, no doubt, perceive, for the metaphysical poets *as* poets, the most sovereign contempt. That they have followers proves nothing—

> No Indian prince has to his palace
> More followers than a thief to the gallows.

MAGAZINE WRITING.—PETER SNOOK.

In a late number of the "Democratic Review" there appeared a very excellent paper (by Mr. Duyckinck) on the subject of Magazine Literature—a subject much less thoroughly comprehended here than either in France or in England. In America we compose now and then agreeable essays and other matters of that character, but we have not yet caught the true Magazine spirit—a thing neither to be defined nor described. Mr. Duyckinck's article, although piquant, is not altogether to our mind. We think he places too low an estimate on the capability of the Magazine paper. He is inclined to undervalue its power, to limit unnecessarily its province, which is illimitable. In fact, it is in the extent of subject, and not less in the extent or variety of *tone*, that the French and English surpass us to so good a purpose. How very rarely are we struck with an American Magazine article as with an absolute novelty — how frequently the foreign articles so affect us! We are so circumstanced as to be unable to *pay* for elaborate compositions — and, after all, the true invention is elaborate. There is no greater mistake than the supposition that a true originality is a mere matter of impulse or inspiration. To originate, is carefully, patiently, and understandingly to combine. The few American Magazinists who ever think of this elaboration at all, cannot afford to carry it into practice for the paltry prices offered them by our periodical publishers. For this and other glaring reasons we are behind the age in a *very* important branch of literature, a branch which, moreover, is daily growing in importance, and which, in the end (not far distant) will be the *most* influential of all the departments of Letters.

We are lamentably deficient not only in invention proper, but in that which is more strictly *art*. What American, for instance, in penning a criticism ever supposes

himself called upon to present his readers with more than the exact stipulation of his title—to present them with a criticism and *something beyond?* Who thinks of making his critique a work of art in itself, independently of its critical opinions? a work of art, such as are all the more elaborate and most effective reviews of Macaulay? Yet these reviews we have evinced no incapacity to appreciate when presented. The best American review ever penned is miserably ineffective when compared with the notice of Montagu's Bacon, and yet this latter is, in general, a piece of tawdry sophistry, owing everything to a consummate, to an exquisite arrangement—to a thorough and just sufficiently comprehensive diffuseness, to a masterly *climaxing* of points—to a style which dazzles the understanding with its brilliancy, but not more than it misleads it by its perspicuity, causing us so distinctly to comprehend that we fancy we coincide—in a word, to the perfection of art—of all the art which a Macaulay can wield, or which is applicable to any criticism that a Macaulay could write.

It is, however, in the composition of that class of Magazine papers which come properly under the head of *Tales* that we evince the most remarkable deficiency in skill. If we except, first, Mr. Hawthorne, secondly, Mr. Simms, thirdly, Mr. Willis, and fourthly, one or two others whom we may as well put mentally together without naming them, there is not even a respectably skilful tale-writer on this side the Atlantic. We have seen, to be sure, many very well-constructed stories—individual specimens—the work of American Magazinists, but these specimens have invariably appeared to be happy accidents of construction, their authors in subsequent tales having always evinced an incapacity to construct.

We have been led to a comparison of the American with the British ability in tale-writing by a perusal of some Magazine papers, the composition of the author of "Chartley" and "The Invisible Gentleman." He is one of the best of the English journalists, and has some of the happiest peculiarities of Dickens, whom he preceded in the popular favour. The longest and best of his tales, properly

so-called, is "Peter Snook," and this presents so many striking points for the consideration of the Magazinist, that we feel disposed to give an account of it in full.

Peter Snook, the hero, and the *beau idéal* of a Cockney, is a retail linen-draper in Bishopsgate Street. He is of course a stupid and conceited, although at bottom a very good little fellow, and "always looks as if he was frightened." Matters go on very thrivingly with him until he becomes acquainted with Miss Clarinda Bodkin, "a young lady owning to almost thirty, and withal a great proficient in the mysteries of millinery and mantua-making." Love and ambition, however, set the little gentleman somewhat beside himself. "If Miss Clarinda would but have me," says he, "we might divide the shop, and have a linen-drapery side, and a haberdashery and millinery side, and one would help the other. There'd be only one rent to pay, and a double business—and it would be so comfortable, too!" Thinking thus, Peter commences a flirtation, to which Miss Clarinda but doubtfully responds. He escorts the lady to White Conduit House, Bagnigge Wells, and other genteel places of public resort—and, finally, is so rash as to accede to the proposition, on her part, of a trip to Margate. At this epoch of the narrative, the writer observes that the subsequent proceedings of the hero are gathered from accounts rendered by himself, when called upon, after the trip, for explanation.

It is agreed that Miss Clarinda shall set out alone for Margate—Mr. Snook following her, after some indispensable arrangements. These occupy him until the middle of July, at which period, taking passage in the "Rose in June," he safely reaches his destination. But various misfortunes here await him — misfortunes admirably adapted to the meridian of Cockney feeling, and the capacity of Cockney endurance. His umbrella, for example, and a large brown paper parcel, containing a new pea-green coat and flower-patterned embroidered silk waistcoat, are tumbled into the water at the landing-place, and Miss Bodkin forbids him her presence in his old clothes. By a tumble of his own, too, the skin is rubbed from both his shins for several

inches, and the surgeon, having no regard to the lover's cotillon engagements, enjoins on him a total abstinence from dancing. A cockchafer, moreover, is at the trouble of flying into one of his eyes, and (worse than all) a tall military-looking shoemaker, Mr. Last, has taken advantage of the linen-draper's delay in reaching Margate, to ingratiate himself with his mistress. Finally, he is cut by Last, and rejected by the lady, and has nothing left for it but to secure a homeward passage in the "Rose in June."

In the evening of the second day after his departure, the vessel drops anchor off Greenwich. Most of the passengers go ashore, with the view of taking the stage to the city. Peter, however, who considers that he has already spent money enough to no purpose, prefers remaining on board. "We shall get to Billingsgate," says he, "while I am sleeping, and I shall have plenty of time to go home and dress, and go into the city and borrow the trifle I may want for Pester and Company's bill, that comes due the day after to-morrow." This determination is a source of much trouble to our hero, as will be seen in the sequel. Some shopmen who remain with him in the packet, tempt him to unusual indulgences, in the way, first, of brown stout, and, secondly, of positive French Brandy. The consequence is that Mr. Snook falls, thirdly, asleep, and, fourthly, overboard.

About dawn on the morning after this event, Ephraim Hobson, the confidential clerk and factotum of Mr. Peter Snook, is disturbed from a sound sleep by the sudden appearance of his master. That gentleman seems to be quite in a bustle, and delights Ephraim with an account of a whacking wholesale order for exportation just received. "Not a word to anybody about the matter!" exclaims Peter, with unusual emphasis. "It's such an opportunity as don't come often in a man's life-time. There's a captain of a ship—he's the owner of her, too; but never mind! there an't time to enter into particulars now, but you'll know all by-and-by — all you have to do, is to do as I tell you—so, come along!"

Setting Ephraim to work, with directions to pack up

immediately all the goods in the shop, with the exception of a few trifling articles, the master avows his intention of going into the city, "to borrow enough money to make up Pester's bill, due to-morrow." "I don't think you'll want much, sir," replied Mr. Hobson with a self-complacent air. "I've been looking about long-winded 'uns, you see, since you've been gone, and I've got Shy's money and Slack's account, which we'd pretty well given up for a bad job, and one or two more. There—there's the list—and there's the key to the strong box, where you'll find the money, besides what I've took at the counter." Peter, at this, seems well pleased, and shortly afterwards goes out, saying, he cannot tell when he'll be back, and giving directions that whatever goods may be sent in during his absence shall be left untouched till his return.

It appears that, after leaving his shop, Mr. Snook proceeded to that of Jobb, Flashbill and Co. (one of whose clerks, on board the "Rose in June," had been very liberal in supplying our hero with brandy on the night of his ducking), looked over a large quantity of ducks and other goods, and finally made purchase of "a choice assortment," to be delivered the same day. His next visit was to Mr. Bluff, the managing partner in the banking-house where he usually kept his cash. His business now was to request permission to overdraw a hundred pounds for a few days.

"Humph," said Mr. Bluff, "money is very scarce; but—bless me! —yes—it's he! Excuse me a minute, Mr. Snook, there's a gentleman at the front counter whom I want particularly to speak to—I'll be back with you directly." As he uttered these words, he rushed out, and in passing one of the clerks on his way forward he whispered, "Tell Scribe to look at Snook's account, and let me know directly." He then went to the front counter, where several people were waiting to pay and receive money. "Fine weather this, Mr. Butt. What! you're not out of town like the rest of them?"

"No," replied Mr. Butt, who kept a thriving gin-shop, "no, I sticks to my business—make hay while the sun shines—that's my maxim. Wife up at night—I up early in the morning."

The banker chatted and listened with great apparent interest, till the closing of a huge book on which he kept his eye, told him that his whispered order had been attended to. He then took a gracious leave

of Mr. Butt, and returned back to the counting-house with a slip of paper, adroitly put in his hand while passing, on which was written, "Peter Snook, Linen-Draper, Bishopsgate Street—old account—increasing gradually—balance, £153 : 15 : 6 :—*very* regular." "Sorry to keep you waiting, Mr. Snook," said he, "but we must catch people when we can. Well, what is it you were saying you wanted us to do!"

"I should like to be able to overdraw just for a few days," replied Peter.

"How much?"

"A hundred."

"Won't fifty do?"

"No, not quite, sir."

"Well, you're an honest fellow, and don't come bothering us often; so, I suppose we must not be too particular with you for this once."

Leaving Bluff, Mr. Snook hurries to overtake Mr. Butt, the dealer in spirits, who had just left the banking-house before himself, and to give that gentleman an order for a hogshead of the best gin. As he is personally unknown to Mr. Butt, he hands him a card, on which is written, "Peter Snook, linen and muslin warehouse, No. — Bishopsgate Street Within," etc. etc., and takes occasion to mention that he purchases at the recommendation of Mr. Bluff. The gin is to be at Queenhithe the same evening. The spirit-dealer, as soon as his new customer has taken leave, revolves in his mind the oddity of a linen-draper's buying a hogshead of gin, and determines to satisfy himself of Mr. Snook's responsibility by a personal application to Mr. Bluff. On reaching the bank, however, he is told by the clerks that Mr. Bluff, being in attendance upon a committee of the House of Commons, will not be home in any reasonable time—but also that Peter Snook is a perfectly safe man. The gin is accordingly sent; and several other large orders for different goods, upon other houses, are promptly fulfilled in the same manner. Meantime, Ephraim is busily engaged at home in receiving and inspecting the invoices of the various purchases as they arrive, at which employment he is occupied until dusk, when his master makes his appearance in unusually high spirits. We must here be pardoned for copying some passages

"Well, Ephraim," he exclaimed, "this looks something like business! You haven't had such a job this many a day! Shop looks well now, eh?"

"You know best, sir," replied Hobson. "But hang me if I ain't frightened. When we shall sell all these goods, I'm sure I can't think. You talked of having a haberdashery side to the shop; but if we go on at this rate, we shall want another side for ourselves; I'm sure I don't know where Miss Bodkin is to be put."

"She go to Jericho!" said Peter contemptuously. "As for the goods, my boy, they'll be gone before to-morrow morning. All you and I have got to do is to pack 'em up; so, let us turn to, and strap at it."

Packing was Ephraim's favourite employment, but, on the present occasion, he set to work with a heavy heart. His master, on the contrary, appeared full of life and spirits, and corded boxes, sewed up trusses, and packed huge paper parcels with a celerity and an adroitness, truly wonderful.

"Why, you don't get on, Hobson," he exclaimed; "see what I've done! Where's the ink-pot?—oh, here it is!" and he proceeded to mark his packages with his initials, and the letter G below. "There," he resumed, "P. S. G.; that's for me, at Gravesend. I'm to meet the Captain and owner there; show the goods—if there's any he don't like, shall bring 'em back with me; get bills—bankers' acceptances for the rest; see 'em safe on board; *then*—but *not before*, mind that, Master Ephraim! No, no, keep my weather eye open, as the men say on board the "Rose in June." By-the-by, I haven't told you yet about my falling overboard, whap into the river."

"Falling overboard!" exclaimed the astonished shopman, quitting his occupation to stand erect and listen.

"Ay, ay," continued Peter—"see it won't do to tell you long stories *now*. There—mark that truss, will you! Know all about it some day. Lucky job, though—tell you that: got this thundering order by it. Had one tumble, first, going off, at Margate. Spoilt my peagreen—never mind—that was a lucky tumble, too. Hadn't been for that, shouldn't so soon have found out the game a certain person was playing with me. She go to Jericho!"

But for the frequent repetition of this favourite expression, Ephraim Hobson has since declared he should have doubted his master's identity during the whole of that evening, as there was something very singular about him; and his strength and activity in moving the bales, boxes, and trusses, were such as he had never previously exhibited. The phrase condemning this, that, or the other thing or person to "go to Jericho," was the only expression that he uttered, as the shopman said.

"naturally," and Peter repeated that whimsical anathema as often as usual.

The goods being all packed up, carts arrive to carry them away, and by half-past ten o'clock the shop is entirely cleared, with the exception of some trifling articles to make show on the shelves and counters. Two hackney coaches are called. Mr. Peter Snook gets into one with a variety of loose articles which would require too much time to pack, and his shopman into another with some more. Arriving at Queenhithe, they find all the goods previously sent already embarked in the hold of a long-decked barge, which lies near the shore. Mr. Snook now insists upon Ephraim's going on board and taking supper and some hot rum and water. This advice he follows to so good a purpose, that he is at length completely bewildered, when his master taking him up in his arms carries him on shore, and there setting him down, leaves him to make the best of his way home as he can.

About eight the next morning, Ephraim awaking of course in a sad condition both of body and mind, sets himself immediately about arranging the appearance of the shop, "so as to secure the credit of the concern." In spite of all his ingenuity, however, it maintains a poverty-stricken appearance, which circumstance excites some most unreasonable suspicions in the mind of Mr. Bluff's clerk, upon his calling at ten with Pester and Co.'s bill (three hundred and sixteen pounds seventeen shillings), and receiving by way of payment a cheque upon his own banking house for the amount—Mr. Snook having written this cheque before his departure with the goods, and left it with Ephraim. On reaching the bank, therefore, the clerk inquires if Peter Snook's cheque is good for three hundred and sixteen pounds odd, and is told that it is not worth a farthing, Mr. S. having overdrawn for a hundred. While Mr. Bluff and his assistants are conversing on this subject, Butt, the gin-dealer, calls to thank the banker for having recommended him a customer, which the banker denies having done. An explanation ensues, and "stop thief!" is the cry. Ephraim is sent for, and reluctantly made to tell all he knows of his

master's proceedings on the day before—by which means a knowledge is obtained of the other houses, who (it is supposed) have been swindled. Getting a description of the barge which conveyed the goods from Queenhithe, the whole party of the creditors now set off in pursuit.

About dawn the next morning they overtake the barge a little below Gravesend—when four men are observed leaving her and rowing to the shore in a skiff. Peter Snook is found sitting quietly in the cabin, and, although apparently a little surprised at seeing Mr. Pester, betrays nothing like embarrassment or fear.

"Ah, Mr. Pester! is it you? Glad to see you, sir! So you've been taking a trip out o' town, and are going back with us? We shall get to Billingsgate between eight and nine, they say; and I hope it won't be later, as I've a bill of yours comes due to-day, and I want to be at home in time to write a check for it."

The goods are also found on board, together with three men in the hold, gagged and tied hand and foot. They give a strange account of themselves. Being in the employ of Mr. Heaviside, a lighterman, they were put in charge of "The Flitter," when she was hired by Peter Snook for a trip to Gravesend. According to their orders, they took the barge, in the first instance, to a wharf near Queenhithe, and helped to load her with some goods brought down in carts. Mr. Snooks afterwards came on board, bringing with him two fierce-looking men, and "a little man with a hooked nose" (Ephraim.) Mr. S. and the little man, then, "had a sort of jollification" in the cabin, till the latter got drunk and was carried ashore. They then proceeded down the river, nothing particular occurring till they had passed Greenwich Hospital, when Mr. S. ordered them to lay the barge alongside a large black-sided ship. No sooner was the order obeyed than they were boarded by a number of men from said ship, who seized them, bound them, gagged them, and put them in the hold.

The immediate consequence of this information is that Peter is bound, gagged, and put down into the hold in the same manner, by way of retaliation, and for safe keeping

on his way back to the city. On the arrival of the party, a meeting of the creditors is called. Peter appears before them in a great rage, and with the air of an injured man. Indeed, his behaviour is so *mal à propos* to his situation as entirely to puzzle his interrogators. He accuses the whole party of a conspiracy.

"Peter Snook," said Mr. Pester solemnly, from the chair, "that look does not become you after what has passsed. Let me advise you to conduct yourself with propriety. You will find that the best policy, depend on't."

"A pretty thing for you for to come to talk of propriety!" exclaimed Peter; "you, that seed me laid hold on by a set of ruffians, and never said a word, nor given information a'terwards! And here have I been kept away from business I don't know how long, and shut up like a dog in a kennel; but I look upon't you were at the bottom of it all—you and that fellow with the plum-pudding face, as blowed me up about a cask of gin! What you both mean by it, I can't think; but if there's any law in the land, I'll make you remember it, both of you—that's what I will!"

Mr. Snook swears that he never saw Jobb in his life, except on the occasion of his capture in the "The Flitter," and positively denies having looked out any parcel of goods at the house of Jobb, Flashbill, and Co. With the banker, Mr. Bluff, he acknowledges an acquaintance—but not having drawn for the two hundred and seventy pounds odd, or having ever overdrawn for a shilling in his life. Moreover, he is clearly of opinion that the banker has still in his hands more than a hundred and fifty pounds of his (Mr. Snook's) money. He can designate several gentlemen as being no creditors of his, although they were of the number of those from whom his purchases had been made for the "whacking" shipping out, and although their goods were found in "The Flitter." Ephraim is summoned, and testifies to all the particulars of his master's return, and the subsequent packing, cart-loading, and embarkation as already told—accounting for the extravagances of Mr. Snook as being "all along of *that* Miss Bodkin."

"Lor', master, hi's glad to see you agin," exclaimed Ephraim. "Who'd ha' thought as 'twould come to this?"

"Come to what?" cried Peter, "I'll make 'em repent of it, every man Jack of 'em, before I've done, if there's law to be had for love or money!"

"Ah, sir," said Ephraim, "we'd better have stuck to the retail. I was afraid that shipping consarn wouldn't answer, and tell'd you so, if you recollect, but you wouldn't hearken to me."

"What shipping concern?" inquired Peter, with a look of amazement.

"La! master," exclaimed Ephraim, "it aint of any use to pretend to keep it a secret now, when everybody knows it. I didn't tell Mr. Pester, though, till the last, when all the goods was gone out of the shop, and the sheriff's officers had come to take possession of the house."

"Sheriff's officers in possession of my house!" roared Peter. "All the goods gone out of the shop! What do you mean by that, you rascal! What have you been doing in my absence?" And he sprang forward furiously, and seized the trembling shopman by the collar with a degree of violence which rendered it difficult for the two officers in attendance to disengage him from his hold.

Hereupon, Mr. Snap, the attorney retained by the creditors, harangues the company at some length, and intimates that Mr. Snook is either mad or acting the madman for the purpose of evading punishment. A practitioner from Bedlam is sent for, and some artifices resorted to, but to no purpose. It is found impossible to decide upon the question of sanity. The medical gentleman, in his report to the creditors, confesses himself utterly perplexed, and, without giving a decision, details the particulars of a singular story told him by Mr. Snook himself, concerning the mode of his escape from drowning after he fell overboard from the "Rose in June." "It is a strange unlikely tale to be sure," says the physician, "and if his general conversation was of that wild, imaginative, flighty kind which I have so often witnessed, I should say it was purely ideal; but he appears such a plain-spoken simple sort of a person, that it is difficult to conceive how he could invent such a fiction." Mr. Snook's narration is then told, not in his very words, but in the author's own way, with all the particulars obtained from Peter's various recitations. We give it only in brief.

Upon tumbling overboard, Mr. Snook (at least according to his own story) swam courageously as long as he could. He was upon the point of sinking, however, when an oar was thrust under his arm, and he found himself lifted in a boat by a "dozen dark-looking men." He is taken on board a large ship, and the captain, who is a droll genius, and talks in rhyme somewhat after the fashion of the wondrous Tale of Alroy, entertains him with great cordiality, dresses him in a suit of his own clothes, makes him drink in the first place a brimmer of "something hot," and afterwards plies him with wines and cordials of all kinds at a supper of the most magnificent description. Warmed in body and mind by this excellent cheer, Peter reveals his inmost secrets to his host, and talks freely and minutely of a thousand things; of his man Ephraim and his oddities; of his bank account; of his great credit; of his adventures with Miss Bodkin; of his prospects in trade; and especially of the names, residences, etc. etc., of the wholesale houses with whom he is in the habit of dealing. Presently, being somewhat overcome with wine he goes to bed at the suggestion of the captain, who promises to call him in season for a boat in the morning, which will convey him to Billingsgate in full time for Pester and Co.'s note. How long he slept is uncertain—but when he awoke a great change was observable in the captain's manner, who was somewhat brusque, and handed him over the ship's side into the barge where he was discovered by the creditors in pursuit, and which he was assured would convey him to Billingsgate.

This relation, thus succinctly given by us, implies little or nothing. The result, however, to which the reader is ingeniously led by the author, is, that the real Peter Snook has been duped, and that the Peter Snook who made the various purchases about town, and who appeared to Ephraim only during the morning and evening twilights of the eventful day, was, in fact, no other person than the captain of "the strange, black-sided ship." We are to believe that, taking advantage of Peter's communicativeness, and a certain degree of personal resemblance to

himself, he assumed our hero's clothes while he slept, and made a bold and nearly successful attempt at wholesale peculation.

The incidents of this story are forcibly conceived, and even in the hands of an ordinary writer would scarcely fail of effect. But, in the present instance, so unusual a tact is developed in the narration that we are inclined to rank "Peter Snook" among the few tales which (each in its own way) are absolutely faultless. It is a Flemish home-piece of the highest order—its merits lying in its chiaroscuro—in that blending of light and shade and shadow, where nothing is too distinct, yet where the idea is fully conveyed—in the absence of all rigid outlines and all miniature painting—in the not undue warmth of the colouring—and in a well subdued exaggeration at all points—an exaggeration never amounting to caricature.

CRYPTOGRAPHY.

As we can scarcely imagine a time when there did not exist a necessity, or at least a desire, of transmitting information from one individual to another in such manner as to elude general comprehension, so we may well suppose the practice of writing in cipher to be of great antiquity, De la Guilletiere, therefore, who, in his "Lacedæmon Ancient and Modern," maintains that the Spartans were the inventors of Cryptography, is obviously in error. He speaks of the *scytala* as being the origin of the art; but he should only have cited it as one of its earliest instances, so far as our records extend. The *scytalæ* were two wooden cylinders, precisely similar in all respects. The general of an army, in going upon any expedition, received from the *ephori* one of these cylinders, while the other remained in their possession. If either party had occasion to communicate with the other, a narrow strip of parchment was so wrapped around the *scytala* that the edges of the skin fitted accurately each to each. The writing was then inscribed longitudinally, and the epistle unrolled and despatched. If, by mischance, the messenger was intercepted, the letter proved unintelligible to his captors. If he reached his destination safely, however, the party addressed had only to involve the second cylinder in the strip to decipher the inscription. The transmission to our own times of this obvious mode of cryptography is due, probably, to the *historical* uses of the *scytala* rather than to anything else. Similar means of secret intercommunication must have existed almost contemporaneously with the invention of letters.

It may be as well to remark, in passing, that in none of the treatises on the subject of this paper which have fallen under our cognisance have we observed any suggestion of a method—other than those which apply alike to all ciphers —for the solution of the cipher by *scytala*. We read of

instances, indeed, in which the intercepted parchments were deciphered; but we are not informed that this was ever done except accidentally. Yet a solution might be obtained with absolute certainty in this manner. The strip of skin being intercepted, let there be prepared a cone of great length comparatively—say six feet long—and whose circumference at base shall at least equal the length of the strip. Let this latter be rolled upon the cone near the base, edge to edge, as above described; then, still keeping edge to edge, and maintaining the parchment close upon the cone, let it be gradually slipped towards the apex. In this process, some of those words, syllables, or letters, whose connection is intended, will be sure to come together at that point of the cone where its diameter equals that of the *scytala* upon which the cipher was written. And as in passing up the cone to its apex, all possible diameters are passed over, there is no chance of a failure. The circumference of the *scytala* being thus ascertained, a similar one can be made, and the cipher applied to it.

Few persons can be made to believe that it is not quite an easy thing to invent a method of secret writing which shall baffle investigation. Yet it may be roundly asserted that human ingenuity cannot concoct a cipher which human ingenuity cannot resolve. In the facility with which such writing is deciphered, however, there exist very remarkable differences in different intellects. Often, in the case of two individuals of acknowledged equality as regards ordinary mental efforts, it will be found that, while one cannot unriddle the commonest cipher, the other will scarcely be puzzled by the most abstruse. It may be observed generally that in such investigations the analytic ability is very forcibly called into action; and, for this reason, cryptographical solutions might with great propriety be introduced into academies as the means of giving tone to the most important of the powers of mind.

Were two individuals, totally unpractised in cryptography, desirous of holding by letter a correspondence which should be unintelligible to all but themselves, it is most probable that they would at once think of a peculiar

alphabet, to which each should have a key. At first it would, perhaps, be arranged that *a* should stand for *z*, *b* for *y*, *c* for *x*, *d* for *w*, etc. etc.; that is to say, the order of the letters would be reversed. Upon second thoughts, this arrangement appearing too obvious, a more complex mode would be adopted. The first thirteen letters might be written beneath the last thirteen, thus:

n o p q r s t u v w x y z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m;

and, so placed, *a* might stand for *n* and *n* for *a*, *o* for *b* and *b* for *o*, etc. etc. This, again, having an air of regularity which might be fathomed, the key alphabet might be constructed absolutely at random.

Thus, a might stand for p
b ,, ,, x
c ,, ,, u
d ,, ,, o, etc.

The correspondents, unless convinced of their error by the solution of their cipher, would no doubt be willing to rest in this latter arrangement as affording full security. But if not, they would be likely to hit upon the plan of arbitrary marks used in place of the usual characters. For example,

(might be employed for a
. ,, ,, b
: ,, ,, c
; ,, ,, d
) ,, ,, e, etc.

A letter composed of such characters would have an intricate appearance unquestionably. If still, however, it did not give full satisfaction, the idea of a perpetually shifting alphabet might be conceived, and thus effected. Let two circular pieces of pasteboard be prepared, one about half-an-inch in diameter less than the other. Let the centre of the smaller be placed upon the centre of the larger, and secured for a moment from slipping; while *radii* are drawn from the common centre to the circumference of the smaller circle, and thus extended to the circumference of the greater. Let there be twenty-six of these *radii*, forming on each

pasteboard twenty-six spaces. In each of these spaces on the under circle write one of the letters of the alphabet, so that the whole alphabet be written—if at random so much the better. Do the same with the upper circle. Now run a pin through the common centre, and let the upper circle revolve, while the under one is held fast. Now stop the revolution of the upper circle, and, while both lie still, write the epistle required; using for *a* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *a* in the larger, for *b* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *b* in the larger, etc. etc. In order that an epistle thus written may be read by the person for whom it is intended, it is only necessary that he should have in his possession circles constructed as those just described, and that he should know any two of the characters (one in the under and one in the upper circle) which were in juxtaposition when his correspondent wrote the cipher. Upon this latter point he is informed by looking at the two initial letters of the document which serve as a key. Thus, if he sees *a m* at the beginning, he concludes that, by turning his circles so as to put these characters in conjunction, he will arrive at the alphabet employed.

At a cursory glance, these various modes of constructing a cipher seem to have about them an air of inscrutable secrecy. It appears almost an impossibility to unriddle what has been put together by so complex a method. And to some persons the difficulty might be great; but to others —to those skilled in deciphering—such enigmas are very simple indeed. The reader should bear in mind that the basis of the whole art of solution, as far as regards these matters, is found in the general principles of the formation of language itself, and thus is altogether independent of the particular laws which govern any cipher, or the construction of its key. The difficulty of reading a cryptographical puzzle is by no means always in accordance with the labour or ingenuity with which it has been constructed. The sole use of the key, indeed, is for those *au fait* to the cipher; in its perusal by a third party, no reference is had to it at all. The lock of the secret is picked. In the

different methods of cryptography specified above, it will be observed that there is a gradually increasing complexity. But this complexity is only in shadow. It has no substance whatever. It appertains merely to the formation, and has no bearing upon the solution of the cipher. The last mode mentioned is not in the least degree more difficult to be deciphered than the first—whatever may be the difficulty of either.

In the discussion of an analogous subject, in one of the weekly papers of this city, about eighteen months ago, the writer of this article had occasion to speak of the application of a rigorous *method* in all forms of thought—of its advantages—of the extension of its use even to what is considered the operation of pure fancy—and thus, subsequently of the solution of cipher. He even ventured to assert that no cipher, of the character above specified, could be sent to the address of the paper, which he would not be able to resolve. This challenge excited, most unexpectedly, a very lively interest among the numerous readers of the journal. Letters were poured in upon the editor from all parts of the country; and many of the writers of these epistles were so convinced of the impenetrability of their mysteries as to be at great pains to draw him into wagers on the subject. At the same time, they were not always scrupulous about sticking to the point. The cryptographs were, in numerous instances, altogether beyond the limits defined in the beginning. Foreign languages were employed. Words and sentences were run together without interval. Several alphabets were used in the same cipher. One gentleman, but moderately endowed with conscientiousness, inditing us a puzzle composed of pothooks and hangers to which the wildest typography of the office could afford nothing similar, went even so far as to jumble together no less than *seven distinct alphabets*, without intervals between the letters, *or between the lines*. Many of the cryptographs were dated in Philadelphia, and several of those which urged the subject of a bet were written by gentlemen of this city. Out of, perhaps, one hundred ciphers altogether received, there was only one which we

did not immediately succeed in resolving. This one we *demonstrated* to be an imposition—that is to say, we fully proved it a jargon of random characters, having no meaning whatever. In respect to the epistle of the seven alphabets, we had the pleasure of completely *nonplussing* its inditer by a prompt and satisfactory translation.

The weekly paper mentioned was, for a period of some months, greatly occupied with the hieroglyphic and cabalistic-looking solutions of the cryptographs sent us from all quarters. Yet with the exception of the writers of the ciphers, we do not believe that any individuals could have been found among the readers of the journal who regarded the matter in any other light than in that of a desperate humbug. We mean to say that no one really believed in the authenticity of the answers. One party averred that the mysterious figures were only inserted to give a *queer* air to the paper, for the purpose of attracting attention. Another thought it more probable that we not only solved the ciphers, but put them together ourselves for solution. This having been the state of affairs at the period when it was thought expedient to decline further dealings in necromancy, the writer of this article avails himself of the present opportunity to maintain the truth of the journal in question—to repel the charges of rigmarole by which it was assailed—and to declare in his own name, that the ciphers were all written in good faith, and solved in the same spirit.

A very common and somewhat too obvious mode of secret correspondence is the following. A card is interspersed, at irregular intervals with oblong spaces, about the length of ordinary words of three syllables in a bourgeois type. Another card is made exactly coinciding. One is in possession of each party. When a letter is to be written, the key-card is placed upon the paper and words conveying the true meaning inscribed in the spaces. The card is then removed and the blanks filled up, so as to make out a signification different from the real one. When the person addressed receives the cipher, he has merely to apply to it his own card, when the superfluous words are concealed, and the significant ones alone appear. The chief objection

to this cryptograph is the difficulty of so filling the blanks as not to give a forced appearance to the sentences. Differences also in the handwriting between the words written in the spaces, and those inscribed upon removal of the card, will always be detected by a close observer.

A pack of cards is sometimes made the vehicle of a cipher in this manner. The parties determine, in the first place, upon certain arrangements of the pack. For example: it is agreed that, when a writing is to be commenced, a natural sequence of the spots shall be made; with spades at top, hearts next, diamonds next, and clubs last. This order being obtained, the writer proceeds to inscribe upon the top card the first letter of his epistle, upon the next the second, upon the next the third, and so on until the pack is exhausted, when, of course, he will have written fifty-two letters. He now shuffles the pack according to a preconcerted plan. For example: he takes three cards from the bottom and places them at top, then one from top, placing it at bottom, and so on, for a given number of times. This done, he again inscribes fifty-two characters as before, proceeding thus until his epistle is written. The pack being received by the correspondent, he has only to place the cards in the order agreed upon for commencement, to read, letter by letter, the first fifty-two characters as intended. He has then only to shuffle in the manner prearranged for the second perusal, to decipher the series of the next fifty-two letters—and so on to the end. The objection to this cryptograph lies in the nature of the missive. *A pack of cards*, sent from one party to another would scarcely fail to excite suspicion, and it cannot be doubted that it is far better to secure ciphers from being considered as such than to waste time in attempts at rendering them scrutiny-proof when intercepted. Experience shows that the most cunningly constructed cryptograph, if suspected, can and will be unriddled.

An unusually secure mode of secret intercommunication might be thus devised. Let the parties each furnish themselves with a copy of the same edition of a book—the rarer the edition the better—as also the rarer the book. In the

cryptograph, numbers are used altogether, and these numbers refer to the locality of letters in the volume. For example—a cipher is received commencing, 121-6-8. The party adressed refers to page 121, and looks at the sixth letter from the left of the page in the eighth line from the top. Whatever letter he there finds is the initial letter of the epistle—and so on. This method is very secure; yet it is *possible* to decipher any cryptograph written by its means—and it is greatly objectionable otherwise, on account of the time necessarily required for its solution, even with the key-volume.

It is not to be supposed that Cryptography, as a serious thing, as the means of imparting important information, has gone out of use at the present day. It is still commonly practised in diplomacy; and there are individuals, even now, holding office in the eye of various foreign governments, whose real business is that of deciphering. We have already said that a peculiar mental action is called into play in the solution of cryptographical problems, at least in those of the higher order. Good cryptographists are rare indeed; and thus their services, although seldom required, are necessarily well requited.

An instance of the modern employment of writing in cipher is mentioned in a work lately published by Messieurs Lea and Blanchard of this city*—"Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France." In a notice of Berryer, it is said that a letter being addressed by the Duchess de Berri to the Legitimists of Paris, to inform them of her arrival, it was accompanied by a long note in cipher, the key of which she had forgotten to give. "The penetrating mind of Berryer," says the biographer, "soon discovered it. It was this phrase substituted for the twenty-four letters of the alphabet—*Le gouvernement provisoire.*"

The assertion that Berryer "soon discovered the key-phrase," merely proves that the writer of these memoirs is entirely innocent of cryptographical knowledge. Monsieur B. no doubt ascertained the key-phrase; but it was merely to satisfy his curiosity, *after the riddle had been read.* He

* Philadelphia.—*Ed.*

made no use of the key in deciphering. The lock was picked.

In our notice of the book in question (published in the April number of this magazine)* we alluded to this subject thus—

"The phrase '*Le gouvernement provisoire*' is French, and the note in cipher was addressed to Frenchmen. The difficulty of deciphering may well be supposed much greater, had the key been in a foreign tongue; yet any one who will take the trouble may address us a note, in the same manner as here proposed, and the key-phrase may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, or Greek, (or in any of the dialects of these languages), and we pledge ourselves for the solution of the riddle."

This challenge has elicited but a single response, which is embraced in the following letter. The only quarrel we have with the epistle, is that its writer has declined giving us his name in full. We beg that he will take an early opportunity of doing this, and thus relieve us of the chance of that suspicion which was attached to the cryptography of the weekly journal above mentioned—the suspicion of inditing ciphers to ourselves. The postmark of the letter is *Stonington, Conn.*

S———, Ct., April 21, 1841.

To the Editor of Graham's Magazine.

Sir—In the April number of your magazine, while reviewing the translation by Mr. Walsh of "Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France," you invite your readers to address you a note in cipher, "the key phrase to which may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin or Greek," and pledge yourself for its solution. My attention being called, by your remarks, to this species of cipher-writing, I composed for my own amusement the following exercises, in the first part of which the key-phrase is in English—in the second in Latin. As I did not see (by the number for May) that any of your correspondents had availed himself of your offer, I take the liberty to send the enclosed, on which, if you should think it worth your while, you can exercise your ingenuity.

I am, yours respectfully,

S. D. L.

* Graham's.—*Ed.*

No. 1.

Cauhiif aud ftd sdftirf ithot tacd wdde rdchfdr tiu fuaefshffheo fdoudf hetiusafhie tuis ied herhchriai fi aeiftdu wn sdaef it iuhfheo hiidohwid fi aen deodsf ths tiu itis hf iaf iuhoheaiin rdff hedr; aer ftd auf it ftif fdoudfin oissiehoafheo hefdiihodeod taf wdde odeduaiin fdusdr ounsfiouastn. Saen fsdohdf it fdoudf iuhfheo idud weiie fi ftd aeohdeff; fisdfhsdf a fiacdf tdar iaf ftacdr aer ftd ouiie iuhffde isie ihft fisd herdihwid oiiiiuheo tiihr, atfdu ithot ftd tahu wdheo sdushffdr fi ouii aoahe, hetiusafhie oiiir wd fuaefshffdr ihft ihffid raeodu ftaf rhfoicdun iiiir defid iefhi ftd aswiiafiun dshffid fatdin udaotdr hff rdffheafhie. Ounsfiouastn tiidcdu siud suisduin dswuaodf ftifd sirdf it iuhfheo ithot aud uderdudr idohwid iein wn sdaef it fisd desiaeafiun wdn ithot sawdf weiie ftd udai fhoehthoafhie it ftd ohstduf dssiindr fi hff siffdffiu.

No. 2.

Ofoiioiiaso ortsiii sov eodisoioe afduiostifoi ft iftvi si tri oistoiv oiniafetsorit ifeov rsri afotiiiiv ridiiot irio rivvio eovit atrotfetsoria aioriti iitri tf oitovin tri aetifei ioreitit sov usttoi oioittstifo dfti afdooitior trso ifeov tri dfit otftfeov softriedi ft oistoiv oriofiforiti suitteii viireiiitifoi ft tri iarfoisiti iiti trir uet otiiiotiv uitfti rid io tri eoviieeiiiv rfasueostr ft rii dftrit tfoeei.

In the solution of the first of these ciphers we had little more than ordinary trouble. The second proved to be exceedingly difficult, and it was only by calling every faculty into play that we could read it at all. The first runs thus:

"Various are the methods which have been devised for transmitting secret information from one individual to another by means of writing, illegible to any except him for whom it was originally destined; and the art of thus secretly communicating intelligence has been generally termed *cryptography*. Many species of secret writing were known to the ancients. Sometimes a slave's head was shaved and the crown written upon with some indelible colouring fluid; after which the hair being permitted to

grow again, information could be transmitted with little danger that discovery would ensue until the ambulatory epistle safely reached its destination. Cryptography, however pure, properly embraces those modes of writing which are rendered legible only by means of some explanatory key which makes known the real signification of the ciphers employed to its possessor."

The key-phrase of this cryptograph is—"A word to the wise is sufficient."

The second is thus translated—

"Nonsensical phrases and unmeaning combinations of words, as the learned lexicographer would have confessed himself, when hidden under cryptographic ciphers, serve to *perpdex* the curious enquirer, and baffle penetration more completely than would the most profound *apothegms* of learned philosophers. Abstruse disquisitions of the scholiasts were they but presented before him in the undisguised vocabulary of his mother tongue"——

The last sentence here (as will be seen) is broken off short. The spelling we have strictly adhered to. *D*, by mistake, has been put for *l* in *perplex*.

The key-phrase is—"*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*"

In the ordinary cryptograph, as will be seen in reference to most of those we have specified above, the artificial alphabet agreed upon by the correspondents is employed, letter for letter in place of the usual or natural one. For example—two parties wish to communicate secretly. It is arranged before parting that

)	shall	stand	for a
(	,,	,,	b
—	,,	,,	c
*	,,	,,	d
.	,,	,,	e
'	,,	,,	f
;	,,	,,	g
:	,,	,,	h
?	,,	,,	i or j
!	,,	,,	k
&	,,	,,	l
0	,,	,,	m

‘	shall stand	for	n
†	,,	,,	o
‡	,,	,,	p
¶	,,	,,	q
☞	,,	,,	r
]	,,	,,	s
[	,,	,,	t
£	,,	,,	u or v
$	,,	,,	w
i	,,	,,	x
¡	,,	,,	y
👍	,,	,,	z

Now the following note is to be communicated—

“We must see you immediately upon a matter of great importance. Plots have been discovered, and the conspirators are in our hands. Hasten!”

These words would be written thus—

$. 0 £] [] . . ¡ † £ ? 00 . * ?) [. & ¡ £ ‡ † ‘) 0) [[. ☞ † ’ ; ☞ .) [? 0 ‡ † ☞ [) ‘ — . ‡ & † [] :) £ . (. . ‘ * . ⌋ — † £ . ☞ . *) ‘ * [: . — † ‘] ‡ ? ☞) [† ☞]) ☞ . ? ‘ † £ ☞ :) ‘ *] :)] [. ‘

This certainly has an intricate appearance, and would prove a most difficult cipher to any one not conversant with cryptography. But it will be observed that *a*, for example, is never represented by any other character than), *b* never by any other character than (, and so on. Thus by the discovery, accidental or otherwise, of any one letter, the party intercepting the epistle would gain a permanent and decided advantage, and could apply his knowledge to all the instances in which the character in question was employed throughout the cipher.

In the cryptographs, on the other hand, which have been sent us by our correspondent at Stonington, and which are identical in conformation with the cipher resolved by Berryer, no such permanent advantage is to be obtained.

Let us refer to the second of these puzzles. Its key-phrase runs thus.—

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.

Let us now place the alphabet beneath this phrase, letter beneath letter—

S	u	a	v	i	t	e	r	j	n	m	o	d		o	f	o	r	t	i	t	e	r	i		n	r	e	
A	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z			

We here see that

a	stands for	c
d	,,	m
e	,,	g, u, and z
f	,,	o
i	,,	e, i, s and w
m	,,	k
n	,,	j and x
o	,,	l, n, and p
r	,,	h, q, v, and y
s	,,	a
t	,,	f, r, and t
u	,,	b
v	,,	d

In this manner *n* stands for two letters, and *e, o,* and *t* for three each, while *i* and *r* represent each as many as four. Thirteen characters are made to perform the operations of the whole alphabet. The result of such a key-phrase upon the cipher is to give it the appearance of a mere medley of the letters *e, o, t, r,* and *i,* the latter character greatly predominating through the accident of being employed for letters, which, themselves, are inordinately prevalent in most languages—we mean *e* and *i.*

A letter thus written being intercepted, and the key-phrase unknown, the individual who should attempt to decipher it may be imagined *guessing,* or otherwise attempting to convince himself, that a certain character (*i,* for example), represented the letter *e.* Looking throughout the cryptograph for confirmation of this idea he would meet with nothing but a negation of it. He would see the character in situations where it could not possibly represent *e.* He might, for instance, be puzzled by four *i*'s forming of themselves a single word, without the intervention of any other character, in which case, of course, they could not be *all e*'s. It will be seen that the word *wise* might be thus constructed. We say this may be seen *now,* by us, in possession of the key-phrase, but the question will no doubt

occur, how, *without* the key-phrase, and without cognisance of any single letter in the cipher, it would be possible for the interceptor of such a cryptograph to make anything of such a word as *iiii?*

But again. A key-phrase might easily be constructed in which one character would represent seven, eight, or ten letters. Let us then imagine the word *iiiiiiiii* presenting itself in a cryptograph to an individual *without* the proper key-phrase, or, if this be a supposition somewhat too perplexing, let us suppose it occurring to the person for whom the cipher is designed, and who *has* the key-phrase. What is he to do with such a word as *iiiiiiiii?* In any of the ordinary books upon Algebra will be found a very concise *formula* (we have not the necessary type for its insertion here) for ascertaining the number of arrangements in which *m* letters may be placed, taken *n* at a time. But no doubt there are none of our readers ignorant of the innumerable combinations which may be made from these ten *i*'s. Yet, unless it occur otherwise by accident, the correspondent receiving the cipher would have to write down all these combinations before attaining the word intended, and even when he had written them he would be inexpressibly perplexed in selecting the word designed from the vast number of other words arising in the course of the permutation.

To obviate, therefore, the exceeding difficulty of deciphering this species of cryptograph, on the part of the possessors of the key-phrase, and to confine the deep intricacy of the puzzle to those for whom the cipher was not designed, it becomes necessary that some *order* should be agreed upon by the parties corresponding—some order in reference to which those characters are to be read which represent more than one letter—and this *order* must be held in view by the writer of the cryptograph. It may be agreed, for example, that the *first* time an *i* occurs in the cipher it is to be understood as representing that character which stands against the *first i* in the key-phrase, that the *second* time an *i* occurs it must be supposed to represent that letter which stands opposed to the *second i* in the key-

phrase, etc. etc. Thus the *location* of each cipherical letter must be considered in connection with the character itself in order to determine its exact signification.

We say that some preconcerted *order* of this kind is necessary lest the cipher prove too intricate a lock to yield even to its true key. But it will be evident, upon inspection, that our correspondent at Stonington has inflicted upon us a cryptograph in which *no* order has been preserved, in which many characters respectively stand, at absolute random, for many others. If, therefore, in regard to the gauntlet we threw down in April, he should be half-inclined to accuse us of braggadocio, he will yet admit that we have *more* than acted up to our boast. If what we then said was not said *suaviter in modo*, what we now do is at least done *fortiter in re.*

In these cursory observations we have by no means attempted to exhaust the subject of Cryptography. With such object in view a folio might be required. We have indeed mentioned only a few of the ordinary modes of cipher. Even two thousand years ago Æneas Tacticus detailed twenty distinct methods, and modern ingenuity has added much to the science. Our design has been chiefly suggestive, and perhaps we have already bored the readers of the Magazine. To those who desire further information upon this topic we may say that there are extant treatises by Trithemius, Cap. Porta, Vignere, and P. Niceron. The works of the two latter may be found, we believe, in the library of the Harvard University. If, however, there should be sought in these disquisitions, or in any, *rules for the solution* of cipher, the seeker will be disappointed. Beyond some hints in regard to the general structure of language, and some minute exercises in their practical application, he will find nothing upon record which he does not in his own intellect possess.

MARGINALIA.

In getting my books I have been always solicitous of an ample margin; this not so much through any love of the thing in itself, however agreeable, as for the facility it affords me of pencilling suggested thoughts, agreements, and differences of opinion, or brief critical comments in general. Where what I have to note is too much to be included within the narrow limits of a margin, I commit it to a slip of paper, and deposit it between the leaves; taking care to secure it by an imperceptible portion of gum tragacanth paste.

All this may be whim; it may be not only a very hackneyed, but a very idle practice, yet I persist in it still; and it affords me pleasure—which is profit, in despite of Mr. Bentham with Mr. Mill on his back.

This making of notes, however, is by no means the making of mere *memoranda*—a custom which has its disadvantages, beyond doubt. "*Ce que je mets sur papier*," says Bernardin de St. Pierre, "*je remets de ma mémoire, et par consequence je l'oublie;*"—and, in fact, if you wish to forget anything on the spot, make a note that this thing is to be remembered.

But the purely marginal jottings, done with no eye to the Memorandum Book, have a distinct complexion, and not only a distinct purpose, but none at all; this it is which imparts to them a value. They have a rank somewhat above the chance and desultory comments of literary chit-chat—for these latter are not unfrequently "talk for talk's sake," hurried out of the mouth; while the *marginalia* are deliberately pencilled, because the mind of the reader wishes

to unburthen itself of a *thought*—however flippant—however silly—however trivial—still a thought indeed, not merely a thing that might have been a thought in time, and under more favourable circumstances. In the *marginalia*, too, we talk only to ourselves; we therefore talk freshly—boldly—originally—with *abandonnement*—without conceit—much after the fashion of Jeremy Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne, and Sir William Temple, and the anatomical Burton, and that most logical analogist Butler, and some other people of the old day, who were too full of their matter to have any room for their manner, which being thus left out of question was a capital manner indeed—a model of manners, with a richly marginallic air.

The circumscription of space, too, in these pencillings, has in it something more of advantage than inconvenience. It compels us (whatever diffuseness of idea we may clandestinely entertain) into Montesquieu-ism, into Tacitus-ism (here I leave out of view the concluding portion of the "Annals")—or even into Carlyle-ism—a thing which, I have been told, is not to be confounded with your ordinary affectation and bad grammar. I say "bad grammar" through sheer obstinacy, because the grammarians (who should know better) insist upon it that I should not. But then grammar is not what these grammarians will have it; and, being merely the analysis of language, with the result of this analysis, must be good or bad just as the analyst is sage or silly—just as he is a Horne Tooke or a Cobbett.

But to our sheep. During a rainy afternoon, not long ago, being in a mood too listless for continuous study, I sought relief from *ennui* in dipping here and there at random among the volumes of my library—no very large one certainly, but sufficiently miscellaneous, and, I flatter myself, not a little *recherché*.

Perhaps it was what the Germans call the "brain-scattering" humour of the moment; but, while the picturesqueness of the numerous pencil-scratches arrested my attention, their helter-skelteriness of commentary amused me. I found myself at length forming a wish that it had been some other hand than my own which had so bedevilled

the books, and fancying that, in such case, I might have derived no inconsiderable pleasure from turning them over. From this the transition-thought (as Mr. Lyell, or Mr. Murchison, or Mr. Featherstonhaugh would have it) was natural enough—there might be something even in *my* scribblings which, for the mere sake of scribbling, would have interest for others.

The main difficulty respected the mode of transferring the notes from the volumes—the context from the text—without detriment to that exceedingly frail fabric of intelligibility in which the context was imbedded. With all appliances to boot, with the printed pages at their back, the commentaries were too often like Dodona's oracles—or those of Lycophron Tenebrosus—or the essays of the pedant's pupils in Quintilian, which were "necessarily excellent, since even he (the pedant) found it impossible to comprehend them:" what, then, would become of it—this context—if transferred—if translated? Would it not rather be *traduit* (traduced) which is the French synonyme, or *overzezet* (turned topsy-turvy) which is the Dutch one?

I concluded at length to put extensive faith in the acumen and imagination of the reader—this as a general rule. But, in some instances, where even faith would not remove mountains, there seemed no safer plan than so to remodel the note as to convey at least the ghost of a conception as to what it was all about. Where, for such conception, the text itself was absolutely necessary, I could quote it; where the title of the book commented upon was indispensable, I could name it. In short, like a novel-hero dilemma'd, I made up my mind "to be guided by circumstances," in default of more satisfactory rules of conduct.

As for the multitudinous opinion expressed in the subjoined *farrago*—as for my present assent to all, or dissent from any portion of it—as to the possibility of my having in some instances altered my mind—or as to the impossibility of my not having altered it often—these are points upon which I say nothing, because upon these there can be nothing cleverly said. It may be as well to observe, however, that just as the goodness of your true pun is in

the direct ratio of its intolerability, so is nonsense the essential sense of the Marginal Note.

I.—Abusive Paragraphs.

I never read a personally abusive paragraph in the newspapers without calling to mind the pertinent query propounded by Johnson to Goldsmith:—"My dear Doctor, what harm does it do a man to call him Holofernes?"

II.—Adam.

How thoroughly comprehensive is the account of Adam as given at the bottom of the old picture in the Vatican!—"*Adam, divinitus edoctus, primus scientiarum et literarum inventor.*"

III.—The Almighty Dollar.

The Romans worshipped their standards; and the Roman standard happened to be an eagle. Our standard is only one-tenth of an Eagle—a Dollar—but we make all even by adoring it with tenfold devotion.

IV.—America.

It is a thousand pities that the puny witticisms of a few professional objectors should have power to prevent, even for a year, the adoption of a name for our country. At present we have clearly none. There should be no hesitation about "Appalachia." In the first place, it is distinctive. "America"* is not and can never be made so. *We* may legislate as much as we please, and assume for our country whatever name we think right—but to us it will be no name, to any purpose for which a name is needed, unless we can take it away from the regions which employ it at present. South America is "America," and will insist upon remaining so. In the second place, "Appalachia" is indigenous, springing from one of the most magnificent and distinctive features of the country itself. Thirdly, in employing this word we do honour to the Aborigines, whom, hitherto, we

* Mr. Field, in a meeting of "The New York Historical Society," proposed that we take the name of "America," and bestow "Columbia" upon the Continent.

have at all points unmercifully despoiled, assassinated, and dishonoured. Fourthly, the name is the suggestion of, perhaps, the most deservedly eminent among all the pioneers of American literature. It is but just that Mr. Irving should name the land for which, in letters, he first established a name. The last, and by far the most truly important consideration of all, however, is the music of "Appalachia" itself; nothing could be more sonorous, more liquid, or of fuller volume, while its length is just sufficient for dignity. How the guttural "Alleghania" could ever have been preferred for a moment is difficult to conceive. I yet hope to find "Appalachia" assumed.

V.—American Cribbage.

Stolen, body and soul (and spoilt in the stealing) from a paper *of the same title* in the "European Magazine" for December 1817. Blunderingly done throughout, and must have cost more trouble than an original thing. This makes paragraph 33 of my "*Chapter on American Cribbage.*" The beauty of these *exposés* must lie in the precision and unanswerability with which they are given—in day and date—in chapter and verse—and, above all, in an unveiling of the minute trickeries by which the thieves hope to disguise their stolen wares. I must soon a tale unfold, and an astonishing tale it will be. The C—— bears away the bell. The ladies, however, should positively not be guilty of these tricks—for one has never the heart to unmask or deplume them. After all, there is this advantage in purloining one's magazine papers—we are never forced to dispose of them under prime cost.

VI.—American Critics.

Alas! how many American critics neglect the happy suggestion of M. Timon—"*que le ministre de L'Instruction Publique doit lui-même savoir parler Français.*"

VII.—American Letters.—Nationality.

Much has been said of late, about the necessity of maintaining a proper *nationality* in American Letters, but

what this nationality *is*, or what is to be gained by it, has never been distinctly understood. That an American should confine himself to American themes, or even prefer them, is rather a political than a literary idea—and at best is a questionable point. We would do well to bear in mind that "distance lends enchantment to the view." *Ceteris paribus*, a foreign theme is, in a strictly literary sense, to be preferred. After all, the world at large is the only legitimate stage for the autorial *histrio*.

But of the need of *that* nationality which defends our own literature, sustains our own men of letters, upholds our own dignity, and depends upon our own resources, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. Yet here is the very point at which we are most supine. We complain of our want of an International Copyright on the ground that this want justifies our publishers in inundating us with British opinion in British books; and yet when these very publishers, at their own obvious risk, and even obvious loss, do publish an American book, we turn up our noses at it with supreme contempt (this as a general thing) until it (the American book) has been dubbed "readable" by some illiterate Cockney critic. Is it too much to say that, with us, the opinion of Washington Irving—of Prescott—of Bryant—is a mere nullity in comparison with that of any anonymous sub-sub-editor of the "Spectator," the "Athenæum," or the London "Punch?" It is *not* saying too much, to say this. It is a solemn—an absolutely awful fact. Every publisher in the country will admit it to be a fact. There is not a more disgusting spectacle under the sun than our subserviency to British criticism. It is disgusting, first, because it is truckling, servile, pusillanimous; secondly, because of its gross irrationality. We *know* the British to bear us little but ill-will; we know that, in no case, do they utter unbiassed opinions of American books; we know that in the few instances in which our writers have been treated with common decency in England, these writers have either openly paid homage to English institutions, or have had lurking at the bottom of their hearts a secret principle at war with Democracy—we *know* all this, and

yet, day after day, submit our necks to the degrading yoke of the crudest opinion that emanates from the fatherland. Now if we *must* have nationality, let it be a nationality that will throw off this yoke.

The chief of the rhapsodists who have ridden us to death like the Old Man of the Mountain is the ignorant and egotistical Wilson. We use the term rhapsodists with perfect deliberation; for Macaulay and Dilke and one or two others excepted, there is not in Great Britain a critic who can be fairly considered, worthy the name. The Germans, and even the French, are infinitely superior. As regards Wilson, no man ever penned worse criticism or better rhodomontade. That he is "egotistical" his works show to all men, running as they read. That he is "ignorant" let his absurd and continuous school-boy blunders about Homer bear witness. Not long ago we ourselves pointed out a series of similar inanities in his review of Miss Barrett's poems—a series, we say, of gross blunders, arising from sheer ignorance—and we defy him or any one to answer a single syllable of what we then advanced.

And yet this is the man whose simple *dictum* (to our shame be it spoken) has the power to make or to mar any American reputation! In the last number of "Blackwood," he has a continuation of the dull "Specimens of the British Critics," and makes occasion wantonly to insult one of the noblest of our poets, Mr. Lowell. The point of the whole attack consists in the use of slang epithets and phrases of the most ineffably vulgar description. "Squabashes" is the pet term. "Faugh!" is another. "We are Scotsmen to *the spine!*" says Sawney—as if the thing were not more than self-evident. Mr. Lowell is called a "magpie," an "ape," a "Yankee cockney," and his name is intentionally miswritten *John* Russell Lowell. Now were these indecencies perpetrated by an American critic, that critic would be sent to Coventry by the whole press of the country, but since it is Wilson who insults, we, as in duty bound, not only submit to the insult, but echo it, as an excellent jest, throughout the length and breadth of the land. *Quamdiu Catilina?* We do indeed demand the nationality of self-respect. In

Letters as in Government we require a Declaration of Independence. A better thing still would be a Declaration of War—and that war should be carried forthwith "into Africa."

VIII.—Analogy.

There are some facts in the physical world which have a really wonderful analogy with others in the world of thought, and seem thus to give some colour of truth to the (false) rhetorical dogma, that metaphor or simile may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiæ*, for example, with the amount of *momentum* proportionate with it and consequent upon it, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true, in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent impetus is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more extensive in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and are more embarrassed and more full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress.

IX.—Annihilation.

We might contrive a very poetical and very suggestive, although, perhaps no very tenable philosophy, by supposing that the virtuous live while the wicked suffer annihilation hereafter; and the danger of the annihilation (which danger would be in the ratio of the sin) might be indicated nightly by slumber, and occasionally, with more distinctness, by a swoon. In proportion to the dreamlessness of the sleep, for example, would be the degree of the soul's liability to annihilation. In the same way, to swoon and awake in utter unconsciousness of any lapse of time during the syncope would demonstrate the soul to have been then in such condition that, had death occurred, annihilation would have followed. On the other hand, when the revival is attended with remembrance of visions (as is now and then the case, in fact), then the soul would be considered in such condition as

would insure its existence after the bodily death—the bliss or wretchedness of the existence to be indicated by the character of the visions.

X.—Anserine Pens.

Paulus Jovius, living in those benighted times when diamond-pointed styluses were as yet unknown, thought proper, nevertheless, to speak of his goosequill as "*aliquando ferreus, aureus aliquando*"—intending, of course, a mere figure of speech; and from the class of modern authors who use really nothing to write with but steel and gold, some, no doubt, will let their pens, *vice versâ*, descend to posterity under the designation of "anserine"—of course intending always a mere figure of speech.

XI.—Antithesis.

Of Berryer, somebody says "he is the man in whose description is the greatest possible consumption of antithesis." For "description" read "lectures," and the sentence would apply well to Hudson, the lecturer on Shakspeare. Antithesis is his end—he has no other. He does not employ it to enforce thought, but he gathers thought from all quarters with the sole view to its capacity for antithetical expression. His essays have thus only paragraphical effect; as wholes, they produce not the slightest impression. No man living could say what it is Mr. Hudson proposes to demonstrate; and if the question were propounded to Mr. H. himself we can fancy how particularly embarrassed he would be for a reply. In the end, were he to answer honestly, he would say—"*antithesis.*"

As for his reading, Julius Cæsar would have said of him that he sang ill, and undoubtedly he must have "gone to the dogs" for his experience in pronouncing the *r* as if his throat were bored like a rifle-barrel.*

* "*Nec illi* (*Demostheni*) *turpe videbatur vel, optimis relictis magistris, ad canes se conferre, et ab illis literæ vim et naturam petere, illorumque in sonando, quod satis est, morem imitari.*"—Ad Meker. de vet. Pron. Ling. Græcæ.

XII.—Association of Ideas.

No doubt the association of idea is somewhat singular, but I never can hear a crowd of people singing and gesticulating altogether at an Italian opera without fancying myself at Athens, listening to that particular tragedy by Sophocles in which he introduces a full chorus of turkeys who set about bewailing the death of Meleager. It is noticeable in this connection, by the way, that there is not a goose in the world who, in point of sagacity, would not feel itself insulted in being compared with a turkey. The French seem to feel this. In Paris, I am sure, no one would think of saying to Mr. F——, "What a goose you are!"—"Quel *dindon* tu es!" would be the phrase employed as equivalent.

XIII.—Definition of Art.

Were I called on to define, *very* briefly, the term "Art," I should call it "the reproduction of what the Senses perceive in Nature through the veil of the soul." The mere imitation, however accurate, of what *is* in Nature entitles no man to the sacred name of "Artist." Denner was no artist. The grapes of Zeuxis were *in*artistic—unless in a bird's-eye view; and not even the curtain of Parrhasius could conceal his deficiency in point of genius. I have mentioned "the *veil* of the soul." Something of the kind appears indispensable in Art. We can, at any time, double the true beauty of an actual landscape by half-closing our eyes as we look at it. The naked Senses sometimes see too little—but then *always* they see too much.

XIV.—Machinery of Art.

To see distinctly the machinery—the wheels and pinions—of any work of Art is, unquestionably, of itself, a pleasure, but one which we are able to enjoy only just in proportion as we do *not* enjoy the legitimate effect designed by the artist; and, in fact, it too often happens that to reflect analytically upon Art is to reflect after the fashion of the mirrors in the temple of Smyrna, which represent the fairest images as deformed.

XV.—The Artist.

"The artist belongs to his work, not the work to the artist."—*Novalis.**

In nine cases out of ten it is pure waste of time to attempt extorting sense from a German apothegm; or, rather, any sense and every sense may be extorted from all of them. If, in the sentence above quoted, the intention is to assert that the artist is the slave of his theme, and must conform his thoughts to it, I have no faith in the idea, which appears to me that of an essentially prosaic intellect. In the hands of the *true* artist the theme, or "work," is but a mass of clay, of which anything (within the compass of the mass and quality of the clay) may be fashioned at will, or according to the skill of the workman. The clay is, in fact, the slave of the artist. It belongs to him. His genius, to be sure is manifested, very distinctively, in *the choice* of the clay. It should be neither fine nor coarse, abstractly—but just so fine or so coarse—just so plastic or so rigid—as may best serve the purposes of the thing to be wrought—of the idea to be made out, or, more exactly, of the impression to be conveyed. There *are* artists, however, who fancy only the *finest* material, and who, consequently, produce only the *finest* ware. It is generally very transparent and excessively brittle.

XVI.—Bernouilli.

Had John Bernouilli lived to have the experience of Fuller's occiput and sinciput, he would have abandoned in dismay his theory of the non-existence of hard bodies.

XVII.—"Blues."

Our "blues" are increasing in number at a great rate, and should be decimated at the very least. Have we no critic with nerve enough to hang a dozen or two of them, *in terrorem?* He must use a silk-cord of course—as they do in Spain with all grandees of the *blue* blood—of the "*sangre azula.*"

* The *nom de plume* of Von Hardenburgh.

XVIII.—Brevity.

It is not every one who can put "a good thing" properly together, although, perhaps when thus properly put together, every tenth person you meet with may be capable of both conceiving and appreciating it. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that less actual ability is required in the composition of a really good "brief article," than in a fashionable novel of the usual dimensions. The novel certainly requires what is denominated a sustained effort—but this is a matter of mere perseverance, and has but a collateral relation to talent. On the other hand—unity of effect, a quality not easily appreciated or indeed comprehended by an ordinary mind, and a *desideratum* difficult of attainment, even by those who can conceive it—is indispensable in the "brief article," and not so in the common novel. The latter if admired at all, is admired for its detached passages, without reference to the work as a whole —or without reference to any general design—which, if it even exist in some measure, will be found to have occupied but little of the writer's attention, and cannot, from the length of the narrative, be taken in at one view by the reader.

XIX.—Brougham.

That Lord Brougham *was* an extraordinary man no one in his senses will deny. An intellect of unusual capacity, goaded into diseased action by passions nearly ferocious, enabled him to astonish the world, and especially the "hero-worshippers," as the author of Sartor Resartus has it, by the combined extent and variety of his mental triumphs. Attempting many things, it may at least be said that he egregiously failed in none. But that he pre-eminently excelled in any cannot be affirmed with truth, and might well be denied *a priori*. We have no faith in admirable Crichtons, and this merely because we *have* implicit faith in Nature and her laws. "He that is born to be a man," says Wieland, in his Peregrinus Proteus, "neither should nor can be anything nobler, greater, nor better than a man." The Broughams of the human intellect are never its Newtons

or its Bayles. Yet the contemporaneous reputation to be acquired by the former is naturally greater than any which the latter may attain. The versatility of one whom we see and hear is a more dazzling and more readily appreciable merit than his profundity; which latter is best estimated in the silence of the closet, and after the quiet lapse of years. What impression Lord Brougham has stamped upon his age, cannot be accurately determined until Time has fixed and rendered definite the lines of the medal; and fifty years hence it will be difficult perhaps to make out the deepest indentation of the *exergue*. Like Coleridge he should be regarded as one who might have done much, had he been satisfied with attempting but little.

XX.—Bulwer.

He (Bulwer) is the most accomplished writer of the most accomplished era of English Letters; practising all styles and classes of composition, and eminent in all — novelist, dramatist, poet, historian, moral philosopher, essayist, critic, political pamphleteer;—*in each superior to all others*, and only rivalled in each by himself.—*Ward—author of "Tremaine."*

The "only rivalled in each by himself," here puts me in mind of

None but himself can be his parallel.

But surely Mr. Ward (who, although he did write "De Vere," is by no means a fool) could never have put to paper in his sober senses anything so absurd as the paragraph quoted above without stopping at every third word to hold his sides or thrust his pocket-handkerchief into his mouth. If the serious intention be insisted upon, however, I have to remark that the opinion is the *mere* opinion of a writer remarkable for no other good trait than his facility at putting his readers to sleep according to rules Addisonian, and with the least possible loss of labour and time. But as the *mere* opinion of even a Jeffrey or a Macaulay, I have an inalienable right to meet it with another.

As a novelist, then, Bulwer is far more than respectable, although *generally* inferior to Scott, Godwin, D'Israeli, Miss Burney, Sue, Dumas, Dickens, the author of "Ellen Wareham," the author of "Jane Eyre," and several others.

From the list of foreign novels I could select a hundred which he could neither have written nor conceived. As a dramatist, he deserves more credit although he receives less. His "Richelieu," "Money," and "Lady of Lyons" have done much in the way of opening the public eyes to the true value of what is superciliously termed "stage effect" in the hands of one able to manage it. But if commendable at this point, his dramas fail egregiously in points more important; so that upon the whole, he can be said to have written a good play, only when we think of him in connection with the still more contemptible "old dramatist" imitators who are his contemporaries and friends. As historian, he is sufficiently dignified, sufficiently ornate, and more than sufficiently self-sufficient. His "Athens" would have received an Etonian prize, and has all the happy air of an Etonian prize-essay re-vamped. His political pamphlets are very good as political pamphlets and very disreputable as anything else. His essays leave no doubt upon any body's mind that, with the writer, they have been essays indeed. His criticism is really beneath contempt. His moral philosophy is the most ridiculous of all the moral philosophies that ever have been imagined upon earth.

"The men of sense," says Helvetius, "those idols of the unthinking, are very far inferior to the men of passions. It is the strong passions which, rescuing us from sloth, can alone impart to us that continuous and earnest attention necessary to great intellectual efforts."

When the Swiss philosopher here speaks of "inferiority" he refers to inferiority in worldly success; by "men of sense" he intends indolent men of genius. And Bulwer is, emphatically, one of the "men of passions" contemplated in the apothegm. His passions, with opportunities, have made him what he is. Urged by a rapid ambition to do much, in doing nothing he would merely have proved himself an idiot. Something he has done. In aiming at Crichton, he has hit the target an inch or two above Harrison Ainsworth. Not to such intellects belong the honours of universality. His works bear about them the unmistakeable indications of mere talent—talent, I grant of an unusual order, and

nurtured to its extreme of development with a very tender and elaborate care. Nevertheless, it is talent still. Genius it is not.

And the proof is, that while we often fancy ourselves about to be enkindled beneath its influence, fairly enkindled we never are. That Bulwer is no *poet* follows as a corollary from what has been already said:—for to speak of a poet without genius, is merely to put forth a flat contradiction in terms.

XXI.—Bulwer.

That sweet smile and serene—that smile never seen but upon the face of the dying and the dead.—*Earnest Maltravers.*

Bulwer is not the man to look a stern fact in the face. He would rather sentimentalise upon a vulgar although picturesque error. Who ever *really* saw anything but horror in the smile of the dead? We so earnestly *desire* to fancy it "sweet"—that is the source of the mistake, if, indeed, there ever was a mistake in the question.

XXII.—Bulwer's "Athens."

The merely mechanical style of "Athens" is far better than that of any of Bulwer's previous books. In general he is atrociously involute, this is his main defect. He wraps one sentence in another *ad infinitum*, very much in the fashion of those "nests of boxes" sold in our wooden-ware shops, or like the islands within lakes, within islands within lakes, within islands within lakes, of which we read so much in the "Periplus" of Hanno.

XXIII.—Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons."

A hundred criticisms to the contrary notwithstanding, I must regard "The Lady of Lyons" as one of the most successful dramatic efforts of modern times. It is popular, and justly so. It could not fail to be popular so long as the people have a heart. It abounds in sentiments which stir the soul as the sound of a trumpet. It proceeds rapidly and consequentially, the interest not for one moment being permitted to flag. Its incidents are admirably conceived and skilfully wrought into execution. Its *dramatis*

personæ, throughout, have the high merit of being natural, although, except in the case of Pauline, there is no marked individuality. She is a creation which would have done no dishonour to Shakspeare. She excites profound emotion. It has been sillily objected to her that she is weak, mercenary, and at points ignoble. She is, and what then? We are not dealing with Clarissa Harlowe. Bulwer has painted a woman. The chief defect of the play lies in the heroine's consenting to wed Beauseant while aware of the existence and even the continued love of Claud. As the plots runs there is a question in Pauline's soul between a comparatively trivial (because merely worldly) injury to her father, and utter ruin and despair inflicted upon her husband. Here there should not have been an instant's hesitation. The audience have no sympathy with any. Nothing on earth should have induced the wife to give up the living Melnotte. Only the assurance of his death could have justified her in sacrificing herself to Beauseant. As it is, we hate her for the sacrifice. The effect is repulsive, but I must be understood as calling this effect objectionable solely on the ground of its being at war with the whole genius of the play.

XXIV.—Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii."

It would have been becoming, I think, in Bulwer to have made at least a running acknowledgment of that extensive indebtedness to Arnay's "Private Life of the Romans,"* which he had so little scruple about incurring during the composition of "The Last Days of Pompeii." He acknowledges, I believe, what he owes to Sir William Gell's "Pompeiana." Why this? why not that?

XXV.—Bulwer's "Night and Morning."

The style is so involute that one cannot help fancying it must be falsely constructed. If the use of language is to convey ideas, then it is nearly as much a demerit that our words seem to be, as that they are, indefensible. A man's

* 1764.

grammar, like Cæsar's wife, must not only be pure, but above suspicion of impurity.

XXVI.—Bulwer as a Novelist.

We have long learned to reverence the fine intellect of Bulwer. We take up any production of his pen with a positive certainty that, in reading it, the wildest passions of our nature, the most profound of our thoughts, the brightest visions of our fancy, and the most ennobling and lofty of our aspirations will, in due turn, be enkindled within us. We feel sure of rising from the perusal a wiser if not a better man. In no instance are we deceived. From the brief tale—from the "Monos and Daimonos" of the author—to his most ponderous and laboured novels—all is richly, and glowingly intellectual—all is energetic, or astute, or brilliant, or profound. There *may* be men now living who possess the power of Bulwer—but it is quite evident that very few have made that power so palpably manifest. Indeed we know of *none*. Viewing him as a novelist—a point of view exceedingly unfavourable (if we hold to the common acceptation of "the novel") for a proper contemplation of his genius—he is unsurpassed by any writer living or dead. Why should we hesitate to say this, feeling, as we do, thoroughly persuaded of its truth. Scott has excelled him in *many* points, and "The Bride of Lammermoor" is a better book than any individual work by the author of Pelham—"Ivanhoe" is, perhaps, equal to any. Descending to particulars, D'Israeli has a more brilliant, a more lofty, and a more delicate (we do not say a *wilder*) imagination. Lady Dacre has written "Ellen Wareham," a more forcible tale of passion. In some species of wit Theodore Hook rivals, and in broad humour our own Paulding surpasses him. The writer of "Godolphin"* equals him in energy. Banim is a better sketcher of character. Hope is a richer colourist. Captain Trelawney is as original, Moore is as fanciful, and Horace Smith is as learned. But who is there uniting in one person the imagination, the passion, the humour, the energy, the knowledge of the heart, the artist-

* The late Lord Lytton himself.—Ed.

like eye, the originality, the fancy, and the learning of Edward Lytton Bulwer? In a vivid wit—in profundity and a Gothic massiveness of thought—in style—in a calm certainty and definitiveness of purpose—in industry—and above all, in the power of controlling and regulating by volition his illimitable faculties of mind, he is unequalled —he is unapproached.

XXVII.—Camoëns—Genoa, 1798.

Here is an edition, which, so far as microscopical excellence and absolute accuracy of typography are concerned, might well be prefaced with the phrase of the Koran—"There is *no* error in this book." We cannot call a single inverted *o* an error—*can* we? But I am really as glad of having found that inverted *o* as ever was a Columbus or an Archimedes. What, after all, are continents discovered, or silversmiths exposed? Give us a good *o* turned upside-down, and a whole herd of bibliomaniac Arguses overlooking it for years.

XXVIII.—Capitals.

I have now before me a book in which the most noticeable thing is the pertinacity with which "Monarch" and "King" are printed with a capital M and a capital K. The author, it seems, has been lately presented at Court. He will employ a small *g* in future, I presume, whenever he is so unlucky as to have to speak of his God.

XXIX.—Carlyle.

The Carlyle-ists should adopt as a motto the inscription on the old bell from whose metal was cast the Great Tom of Oxford:—"In *Thomæ* laude resono 'Bim! Bom!' sine fraude:"—and "Bim! Bom," in such case, would be a marvellous "echo of sound to sense."

XXX.—Carlyle.

The next work of Carlyle will be entitled "Bow-Wow," and the title-page will have a motto from the opening chapter of the Koran: "There is *no* error in this Book."

XXXI.—Caution in lauding a Friend.

Not long ago, to call a man "a great wizard" was to invoke for him fire and fagot; but now, when we wish to run our *protégé* for President, we just dub him "a *little* magician." The fact is, that, on account of the curious modern *bouleversement* of old opinion, one cannot be too cautious of *the grounds* on which he lauds a friend or vituperates a foe.

XXXII.—Charity.

A strong argument for the religion of Christ is this—that offences against *Charity* are about the only ones which men on their death-beds can be made, not to understand, but to *feel*, as *crime*.

XXXIII.—Coleridge.

All in a hot and copper sky
The bloody sun at noon
Just up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Is it possible that the poet did not know the apparent diameter of the moon to be greater than that of the sun?

XXXIV.—Coleridge's Table-Talk.

The title of this book deceives us. It is by no means "talk," as men understand it—not that true talk of which Boswell has been the best historiographer. In a word, it is not *gossip*, which has been never better defined than by Basil, who calls it "talk for talk's sake," nor more thoroughly comprehended than by Horace Walpole and Mary Wortley Montague, who made it a profession and a purpose. Embracing all things, it has neither beginning, middle, nor end. Thus of the gossipper it was not properly said that "he commences his discourse by jumping *in medias res*." For, clearly, your gossipper commences not at all. He is begun. He is already begun. He is always begun. In the matter of end he is indeterminate. And by these extremes shall ye know him to be of the Cæsars—*porphyrogenitus*—of the right vein—of the true blood—of the blue

blood—of the *sangre azula*. As for laws, he is cognisant of but one, the invariable absence of all. And for his road, were it as straight as the Appia and as broad as that "which leadeth to destruction," nevertheless would he be malcontent without a frequent hop-skip-and-jump, over the hedges, into the tempting pastures of digression beyond. Such is the gossipper, and of such alone is the true *talk*. But when Coleridge asked Lamb if he had ever heard him *preach*, the answer was quite happy—"I have never heard you do anything else." The truth is that "Table Discourse" *might* have answered as a title to this book; but its character can be fully conveyed only in "Post-Prandian Sub-Sermons," or "Three Bottle Sermonoids."

XXXV.—Congress.

Samuel Butler, of Hudibrastic memory, must have had a prophetic eye to the American Congress when he defined a *rabble* as—"A congregation or assembly of the States-General—every one being of a several judgment concerning whatever business be under consideration." . . . "They meet only to quarrel," he adds, "and then return home full of satisfaction *and narrative*."

XXXVI.—Conversation.

To converse well, we need the cool tact of talent—to talk well, the glowing *abandon* of genius. Men of *very* high genius, however, talk at one time *very* well, at another *very* ill:—well, when they have full time, full scope, and a sympathetic listener:—ill, when they fear interruption and are annoyed by the impossibility of exhausting the topic during that particular talk. The partial genius is flashy—scrappy. The true genius shudders at incompleteness—imperfection—and usually prefers silence to saying the something which is not everything that should be said. He is so filled with his theme that he is dumb, first from not knowing how to begin, where there seems eternally beginning behind beginning, and secondly from perceiving his true end at so infinite a distance. Sometimes dashing into a subject, he blunders, hesitates, stops short, sticks fast, and

because he has been overwhelmed by the rush and multiplicity of his thoughts, his hearers sneer at his inability to think. Such a man finds his proper element in those "great occasions" which confound and prostrate the general intellect.

Nevertheless, by his conversation, the influence of the conversationist upon mankind in general is more decided than that of the talker by his talk—the latter invariably talks to best purpose with his pen. And good conversationists are more rare than respectable talkers. I know many of the latter; and of the former only five or six. Most people, in conversing, force us to curse our stars that our lot was not cast among the African nation mentioned by Eudoxus—the savages who having no mouth, never opened it, as a matter of course. And yet, if denied mouth, some persons whom I have in my eye would contrive to chatter on still—as they do now—through the nose.

XXXVII.—International Copyright.

The question of international copyright has been overloaded with words. The right of property in a literary work is disputed merely for the sake of disputation, and no man should be at the trouble of arguing the point. Those who deny it have made up their minds to deny everything tending to further the law in contemplation. Nor is the question of expediency in any respect relevant. Expediency is only to be discussed where no *rights* interfere. It would no doubt be very expedient in any poor man to pick the pocket of his wealthy neighbour (as the poor are the majority the case is precisely parallel to the copyright case), but what would the rich think if expediency were permitted to overrule their right. But even the expediency is untenable, grossly so. The immediate advantage arising to the pockets of our people, in the existing condition of things, is no doubt sufficiently plain. We get more reading for less money than if the international law existed, but the remoter disadvantages are of infinitely greater weight. In brief, they are these: First, we have injury to our national literature

by repressing the efforts of our men of genius, for genius as a general rule is poor in worldly goods and cannot write for nothing. Our genius being thus repressed, we are written *at* only by our "gentlemen of elegant leisure," and mere gentlemen of elegant leisure have been noted, time out of mind, for the insipidity of their productions. In general, too, they are obstinately conservative, and this feeling leads them into imitation of foreign, more especially of British models. This is the one main source of the imitativeness with which, as a people, we have been justly charged, although the first cause is to be found in our position as a colony. Colonies have always naturally aped the mother land. In the second place, irreparable ill is wrought by the almost exclusive dissemination among us of foreign—that is to say, of monarchical or aristocratical sentiment in foreign books, nor is this sentiment less fatal to democracy because it reaches the people themselves directly in the gilded pill of the poem or the novel. We have next to consider the impolicy of our committing, in the national character, an open and continuous wrong on the frivolous pretext of its benefiting ourselves. The last and by far the most important considerations of all, however, is that sense of insult and injury aroused in the whole active intellect of the world, the bitter and fatal resentment excited in the universal heart of literature—a resentment which will not and which cannot make nice distinctions between the temporary perpetrators of the wrong and that democracy in general which permits its perpetration. The autorial body is the most autocratic on the face of the earth. How, then, can those institutions even hope to be safe which systematically persist in trampling it under foot?

XXXVIII.—Cowardice.

That man is not truly brave who is afraid either to seem or to be, when it suits him, a coward.

XXXIX.—Coxe's "Saul, a Mystery."

The Rev. Arthur Coxe's "Saul, a Mystery," having been condemned in no measured terms by Poe of "The Broadway Journal," and Green of "The Emporium," a writer in the "Hartford Columbian" retorts as follows:

An entertaining history,
Entitled "Saul, a Mystery,"
Has recently been published by the Reverend Arthur Coxe.
The poem is dramatic,
And the wit of it is Attic,
And its teachings are emphatic of the doctrines orthodox.
But Mr. Poe, the poet,
Declares he cannot go it—
That the book is very stupid, or something of that sort:
And Green, of "The Empori-
Um," tells a kindred story
And swears like any tory, that it is'nt worth a groat.
But maugre all the croaking
Of the Raven, and the joking
Of the verdant little fellow of the used-to-be Review,
The People, in derision
Of their impudent decision,
Have declared, without division, that the Mystery will do.

The *truth*, of course, rather injures an epigram than otherwise; and nobody will think the worse of the one above when I say that, at the date of its first appearance, I had expressed *no opinion whatever* of the poem to which it refers. "Give a dog a bad name," etc. Whenever a book is abused, people take it for granted that it is *I* who have been abusing it.

Latterly I *have* read "Saul," and agree with the epigrammatist that it "will do"—whoever attempts to wade through it. It will do, also, for trunk-paper. The author is right in calling it "A Mystery"—for a most unfathomable mystery it is. When I got to the end of it, I found it more mysterious than ever—and it was really a mystery how I ever did get to the end—which I half fancied that somebody had cut off, in a fit of ill-will to the critics. I have heard not a syllable about the "Mystery" of late days. "The People" seem to have forgotten it; and Mr. Coxe's

friends should advertise it under the head of "Mysterious Disappearance"—that is to say, the disappearance of a Mystery.

XL.—Critical Quagmire.

It is folly to assert, as some at present are fond of asserting, that the Literature of any nation or age was ever injured by plain speaking on the part of the Critics. As for American Letters, plain speaking about *them* is simply the one thing needed. They are in a condition of absolute quagmire—a quagmire, to use the words of Victor Hugo, *d'où on ne peut se tirer par des periphrases—par des quemadmodums et des verumenimveros.*

XLI.—Criticism.

M——, as a matter of course, would rather be abused by the critics than not be noticed by them at all, but he is hardly to be blamed for growling a little now and then over their criticisms, just as a dog might do if pelted with bones.

XLII.—Criticism.

There is an old German chronicle about Reynard the Fox when crossed in love, about how he desired to turn hermit, but could find no spot in which he could be "thoroughly alone," until he came upon the desolate fortress of Malspart. He should have taken to reading the "American Drama" of "Witchcraft." I fancy he would have found himself "thoroughly alone" in that.

XLIII.—Criticism.

When we attend less to "authority" and more to principles, when we look *less* at merit and *more* at demerit (instead of the converse, as some persons suggest), we shall then be better critics than we are. We must neglect our models and study our capabilities. The mad eulogies on what occasionally has in letters been well done spring from our imperfect comprehension of what it is possible for us to do better. "A man who has never seen the sun," says Calderon, "cannot be blamed for thinking that no glory can

exceed that of the moon; a man who has seen neither moon nor sun cannot be blamed for expatiating on the incomparable effulgence of the morning star." Now, it is the business of the critic so to soar that he shall *see the sun*, even although its orb be far below the ordinary horizon.

XLIV.—Criticism—Anacreon.

A clever French writer of "Memoirs" is quite right in saying that "if the *Universities* had been willing to permit it the disgusting old *débauché* of Teos, with his eternal Bathyllus, would long ago have been buried in the darkness of oblivion."

XLV.—Curran.

How overpowering a style is that of Curran! I use "overpowering" in the sense of the English exquisite. I can imagine nothing more distressing than the extent of his eloquence.

XLVI.—Defoe.

While Defoe would have been fairly entitled to immortality had he never written Robinson Crusoe, yet his many other very excellent writings have nearly faded from our attention in the superior lustre of the Adventures of the Mariner of York. What better possible species of reputation could the author have desired for that book than the species which it has so long enjoyed? It has become a household thing in nearly every family in Christendom. Yet never was admiration of any work—universal admiration—more indiscriminately or more inappropriately bestowed. Not one person in ten—nay, not one person in five hundred, has, during the perusal of Robinson Crusoe, the most remote conception that any particle of genius, or even of common talent, has been employed in its creation! Men do not look upon it in the light of a literary performance. Defoe has none of their thoughts—Robinson all. The powers which have wrought the wonder have been thrown into obscurity by the very stupendousness of the wonder they have wrought? We read, and become perfect abstractions in the intensity of our interest—we close the

book, and are quite satisfied that we could have written as well ourselves. All this is effected by the potent magic of verisimilitude. Indeed the author of Crusoe must have possessed, above all other faculties, what has been termed the faculty of *identification*—that dominion exercised by volition over imagination which enables the mind to lose its own, in a fictitious individuality. This includes, in a very great degree, the power of abstraction; and with these keys we may partially unlock the mystery of that spell which has so long invested the volume before us. But a complete analysis of our interest in it cannot be thus afforded. Defoe is largely indebted to his subject. The idea of man in a state of perfect isolation, although often entertained, was never before so comprehensively carried out. Indeed the frequency of its occurrence to the thoughts of mankind argued the extent of its influence on their sympathies, while the fact of no attempt having been made to give an embodied form to the conception, went to prove the difficulty of the undertaking. But the true narrative of Selkirk in 1711, with the powerful impression it then made upon the public mind, sufficed to inspire Defoe with both the necessary courage for his work, and entire confidence in its success. How wonderful has been the result!

XLVII.—Demonstrativeness.

It is the curse of a certain order of mind that it can never rest satisfied with the consciousness of its ability to do a thing. Not even is it content with doing it. It must both know and show how it was done.

XLVIII.—Derivations of "Weeping-Willow."

We might give two plausible derivations of the epithet "weeping" as applied to the willow. We might say that the word has its origin in the pendulous character of the long branches, which suggest the idea of water dripping; or we might assert that the term comes from a fact in the natural history of the tree. It has a vast insensible perspiration, which, upon sudden cold, condenses, and sometimes is precipitated in a shower. Now, one might very

accurately determine the bias and value of a man's powers of causality by observing which of these two derivations he would adopt. The former is, beyond question, the true; and for this reason—that common or vulgar epithets are universally suggested by common or immediately obvious things, without strict regard of any exactitude in application:—but the latter would be greedily seized by nine philologists out of ten, for no better cause than its *epigrammatism*—than the pointedness with which the singular fact seems to touch the occasion. Here, then, is a subtle source of error which Lord Bacon has neglected. It is an Idol *of the Wit.*

XLIX.—Devouring a Book.

Surely M—— cannot complain of the manner in which his book has been received; for the public, in regard to it, has given him just such an assurance as Polyphemus pacified Ulysses with, while his companions were being eaten up before his eyes. "Your book, Mr. M——," says the public, "shall be—I pledge you my word—the very last that I devour."

L.—Diana's Temple at Ephesus.

Diana's Temple at Ephesus having been burnt on the night in which Alexander was born, some person observed that "it was no wonder, since at the period of the conflagration she was gossiping at Pella." Cicero commends this as a witty conceit, Plutarch condemns it as senseless, and this is the one point in which I agree with the biographer.

LI.—Dickens's "Old Curiosity Shop."

The great feature of the "Curiosity Shop" is its chaste, vigorous, and glorious *imagination.* This is the one charm, all potent, which alone would suffice to compensate for a world more of error than Mr. Dickens ever committed. It is not only seen in the conception and general handling of the story or in the invention of character, but it pervades every sentence of the book. We recognise its prodigious influence in every inspired word. It is this which induces the reader who is at all ideal to pause frequently, to re-read

the occasionally quaint phrases, to muse in uncontrollable delight over thoughts which, while he wonders he has never hit upon them before, he yet admits that he never has encountered. In fact it is the wand of the enchanter.

Had we room to particularise, we would mention as points evincing most distinctly the ideality of the "Curiosity Shop"—the picture of the shop itself—the newly-born desire of the worldly old man for the peace of green fields —his whole character and conduct, in short—the schoolmaster with his desolate fortunes, seeking affection in little children—the haunts of Quilp among the wharf-rats—the tinkering of the Punch-men among the tombs—the glorious scene where the man of the forge sits poring, at deep midnight, into that dread fire—again the whole conception of this character; and, last and greatest, the stealthy approach of Nell to her death—her gradual sinking away on the journey to the village, so skilfully indicated rather than described—her pensive and prescient meditation—the fit of strange musing which came over her when the house *in which she was to die* first broke upon her sight—the description of this house, of the old church, and of the churchyard —everything in rigid consonance with the one impression to be conveyed—that deep meaningless well—the comments of the Sexton upon death, and upon his own secure life—this whole world of mournful yet peaceful idea merging at length into the decease of the child Nelly, and the uncomprehending despair of the grandfather. These concluding scenes are so drawn that human language, urged by human thought, could go no further in the excitement of human feelings. And the pathos is of that best order which is relieved, in great measure, by ideality. Here the book has never been equalled—never approached except in one instance, and that is in the case of the "Undine" of De La Motte Fouqué. The imagination is perhaps as great in this latter work, but the pathos, although truly beautiful and deep, fails of much of its effect through the material from which it is wrought. The chief character being endowed with purely fanciful attributes cannot demand our full sympathies, as can a simple denizen of earth. In saying

that the death of the child left too painful an impression, and should therefore have been avoided, we must of course be understood as referring to the work as a whole, and in respect to its general appreciation and popularity. The death, as recorded, is, we repeat, of the highest order of literary excellence—yet, while none can deny this fact, there are few who will be willing to read the concluding passages a second time.

Upon the whole we think the "Curiosity Shop" very much the best of the works of Mr. Dickens. It is scarcely possible to speak of it too well. It is in all respects a tale which will secure for its author the enthusiastic admiration of every man of genius.

LII.—Dickens and Bulwer.

The Art of Mr. Dickens, although elaborate and great, seems only a happy modification of Nature. In this respect he differs remarkably from the author of "Night and Morning." The latter, by excessive care and by patient reflection, aided by much rhetorical knowledge and general information, has arrived at the capability of producing books which might be mistaken by ninety-nine readers out of a hundred for the genuine inspirations of genius. The former, by the promptings of the truest genius itself, has been brought to compose, and evidently without effort, works which have effected a long-sought consummation, which have rendered him the idol of the people, while defying and enchanting the critics. Mr. Bulwer, through art, has almost created a genius. Mr. Dickens, through genius, has perfected a standard from which art itself will derive its essence in rules.

LIII.—The Elder D'Israeli.

One of the most singular styles in the world, certainly one of the most loose, is that of the elder D'Israeli. For example, he thus begins his Chapter on Bibliomania: "The preceding article [that on Libraries] is honourable to literature." Here no self-praise is intended. The writer means to say merely that the facts narrated in the preceding

article are honourable, etc. Three-fourths of his sentences are constructed in a similar manner. The blunders evidently arise, however, from the author's pre-occupation with his subject. His thought, or rather matter, outruns his pen, and drives him upon condensation at the expense of luminousness. The manner of D'Israeli has many of the traits of Gibbon, although little of the latter's precision.

LIV.—Drama.

The drama, as the chief of the imitative arts, has a tendency to beget and keep alive in its votaries the imitative propensity. This might be supposed *a priori*, and experience confirms the supposition. Of all imitators, dramatists are the most perverse, the most unconscionable, or the most unconscious, and have been so time out of mind. Euripides and Sophocles were merely echoes of Æschylus, and not only was Terence Menander and nothing beyond, but of the sole Roman tragedies extant (the ten attributed to Seneca), nine are on Greek subjects. Here, then, is cause enough for the "decline of the drama," if we are to believe that the drama has declined. But it has not; on the contrary, during the last fifty years it has materially advanced. All other arts, however, have in the same interval advanced at a far greater rate—each very nearly in —the direct ratio of its non-imitativeness—painting, for example, least of all—and the effect on the drama is, of course, that of apparent retrogradation.

LV.—A Drama Scotched.

L—— is busy in attempting to prove that his play was not fairly d——d; that it is only "scotched, not killed;" but if the poor play could speak from the tomb, I fancy it would sing with the opera heroine:

> "The flattering error cease to prove!
> Oh, *let* me be deceased!"

LVI.—Greek Drama.

About the "Antigone," as about all the ancient plays, there seems to me a certain *baldness*, the result of inexperi-

ence in art, but which pedantry would force us to believe the result of a studied and supremely artistic simplicity. Simplicity, indeed, is a very important feature in all true art—but *not* the simplicity which we see in the Greek drama. That of the Greek sculpture is every thing that can be desired, because here the art itself is simplicity in itself and in its elements. The Greek sculptor chiselled his forms from what he saw before him every day, in a beauty nearer to perfection than any work of any Cleomenes in the world. But in the drama, the direct, straight-forward, *un-German* Greek had no Nature so immediately presented from which to make copy. He did what he could—but I do not hesitate to say that that was exceedingly little worth. The profound sense of one or two tragic, or rather melodramatic elements (such as the idea of inexorable Destiny)—this sense gleaming at intervals from out the darkness of the ancient stage, serves, in the very imperfection of its development, to show, not the dramatic ability, but the dramatic *in*ability of the ancients. In a word, the simple arts spring into perfection at their origin; the complex as inevitably demand the long and painfully progressive experience of ages. To the Greeks, beyond doubt, their drama *seemed* perfection—it fully answered, to them, the dramatic end, excitement, and this fact is urged as proof of their drama's perfection in itself. It need only be said, in reply, that their art and their sense of art were necessarily on a level.

LVII.—Dramatic Changes of Scene.

When I call to mind the preposterous "asides" and soliloquies of the drama among civilised nations, the shifts employed by the Chinese playwrights appear altogether respectable. If a general on a Pekin or Canton stage is ordered on an expedition "he brandishes a whip," says Davis, "or takes in his hand the reins of a bridle, and striding three or four times around a platform, in the midst of a tremendous crash of gongs, drums, and trumpets, finally stops short and tells the audience where he has arrived." It would sometimes puzzle a European stage

hero in no little degree to "tell an audience where he has arrived." Most of them seem to have a very imperfect conception of their whereabouts. In the "Mort de Cesar," for example, Voltaire makes his populace rush to and fro exclaiming, "*Courons au Capitole!*" Poor fellows—they are in the capitol all the time; in his scruples about unity of place the author has never once let them out of it.

LVIII.—Modern Eloquence.

We may safely grant that the *effects* of the oratory of Demosthenes were vaster than those wrought by the eloquence of any modern, and yet not controvert the idea that the modern eloquence itself is superior to that of the Greek. The Greeks were an excitable, *unread* race, for they had no printed books. *Vivâ voce* exhortations carried with them, to their quick apprehensions, all the gigantic force of *the new*. They had much of that vivid interest which the first fable has upon the dawning intellect of the child—an interest which is worn away by the frequent perusal of similar things—by the frequent inception of similar fancies. The suggestions, the arguments, the incitements of the ancient rhetorician were, when compared with those of the modern, absolutely novel; possessing thus an immense adventitious force—a force which has been, oddly enough, left out of sight in all estimates of the eloquence of the two eras.

The finest philippic of the Greeks would have been hooted at in the British House of Peers, while an impromptu of Sheridan, or of Brougham, would have carried by storm all the hearts and all the intellects of Athens.

LIX.—Emerson.

When I consider the true talent—the real force of Mr. Emerson, I am lost in amazement at finding in him little more than a respectful imitation of Carlyle. Is it possible that Mr. E. has ever seen a copy of Seneca? Scarcely—or he would long ago have abandoned his model in utter confusion at the parallel between his own worship of the author of "Sartor Resartus" and the aping of Sallust by Aruntius, as described in the 114th Epistle. In the writer of the

"History of the Punic Wars" Emerson is portrayed to the life. The parallel is close; for not only is the imitation of the same character, but the things imitated are identical. Undoubtedly it is to be said of Sallust, far more plausibly than of Carlyle, that his obscurity, his unusuality of expression, and his Laconism (which had the effect of diffuseness, since the time gained in the mere perusal of his pithinesses is trebly lost in the necessity of cogitating them out)—it may be said of Sallust, more truly than of Carlyle, that these qualities bore the impress of his genius, and were but a portion of his unaffected thought. If there is any difference between Aruntius and Emerson, this difference is clearly in favour of the former, who was in some measure excusable on the ground that he was as great a fool as the latter *is not*.

LX.—Espy.

The chief portion of Professor Espy's theory * has been anticipated by Roger Bacon.

LXI.—Expression.

Some Frenchman—possibly Montaigne—says: "People talk about thinking, but for my part I never think except when I sit down to write." It is this never thinking, unless when we sit down to write, which is the cause of so much indifferent composition. But perhaps there is something more involved in the Frenchman's observation than meets the eye. It is certain that the mere act of inditing tends, in a great degree, to the logicalisation of thought. Whenever, on account of its vagueness, I am dissatisfied with a conception of the brain, I resort forthwith to the pen, for the purpose of obtaining, through its aid, the necessary form, consequence, and precision.

How very commonly we hear it remarked that such and such thoughts are beyond the compass of words! I do not believe that any thought, properly so called, is out of the reach of language. I fancy, rather, that where difficulty in expression is experienced, there is, in the intellect which

* Of Storms, Boston, 1841.

experiences it, a want either of deliberateness or of method. For my own part, I have never had a thought which I could not set down in words, with even more distinctness than that with which I conceived it; as I have before observed, the thought is logicalised by the effort at (written) expression. There is, however, a class of fancies, of exquisite delicacy, which are *not* thoughts, and to which, *as yet*, I have found it absolutely impossible to adapt language. I use the word *fancies* at random, and merely because I must use *some* word; but the idea commonly attached to the term is not even remotely applicable to the shadows of shadows in question. They seem to me rather psychal than intellectual. They arise in the soul (alas, how rarely!) only at its epochs of most intense tranquillity—when the bodily and mental health are in perfection—and at those mere points of time where the confines of the waking world blend with those of the world of dreams. I am aware of these "fancies" only when I am upon the very brink of sleep, with the consciousness that I am so. I have satisfied myself that this condition exists but for an inappreciable *point* of time—yet it is crowded with these "shadows of shadows;" and for absolute *thought* there is demanded time's *endurance*. These "fancies" have in them a pleasurable ecstasy, as far beyond the most pleasurable of the world of wakefulness, or of dreams, as the heaven of the Northman theology is beyond its hell. I regard the visions, even as they arise, with an awe which, in some measure, moderates or tranquillises the ecstasy—I so regard them, through a conviction (which seems a portion of the ecstasy itself) that this ecstasy, in itself, is of a character supernal to the human nature—is a glimpse of the spirit's outer world; and I arrive at this conclusion—if this term is at all applicable to instantaneous intuition by a perception that the delight experienced has, as its element, but *the absoluteness of novelty*. I say the absoluteness—for in these fancies—let me now term them psychal impressions—there is really nothing even approximate in character to impressions ordinarily received. It is as if the five senses were supplanted by five myriad others alien to mortality.

Now, so entire is my faith in the *power of words,* that at times I have believed it possible to embody even the evanescence of fancies such as I have attempted to describe. In experiments with this end in view, I have proceeded so far as, first, to control (when the bodily and mental health are good) the existence of the condition—that is to say, I can now (unless when ill) be sure that the condition will supervene, if I so wish it, at the point of time already described—of its supervention until lately I could never be certain even under the most favourable circumstances. I mean to say, merely, that now I can be sure, when all circumstances are favourable, of the supervention of the condition, and feel even the capacity of inducing or compelling it—the favourable circumstances, however, are not the less rare, else had I compelled already the heaven into the earth.

I have proceeded so far, secondly, as to prevent the lapse from *the point* of which I speak—the point of blending between wakefulness and sleep—as to prevent at will, I say, the lapse from this border-ground into the dominion of sleep. Not that I can *continue* the condition—not that I can render the point more than a point—but that I can startle myself from the point into wakefulness; *and thus transfer the point itself into the realm of Memory;* convey its impressions, or more properly their recollections, to a situation where (although still for a very brief period) I can survey them with the eye of analysis. For these reasons—that is to say, because I have been enabled to accomplish thus much—I do not altogether despair of embodying in words at least enough of the fancies in question to convey, to certain classes of intellect, a shadowy conception of their character. In saying this I am not to be understood as supposing that the fancies or psychal impressions to which I allude are confined to my individual self—are not, in a word, common to all mankind—for on this point it is quite impossible that I should form an opinion—but nothing can be more certain than that even a partial record of the impressions would startle the universal intellect of mankind, by the *supremeness of the novelty* of the material employed,

and of its consequent suggestions. In a word—should I ever write a paper on this topic, the world will be compelled to acknowledge that, at last, I have done an original thing.

LXII.—Fate of Superiority.

I have sometimes amused myself by endeavouring to fancy what would be the fate of an individual gifted, or rather accursed, with an intellect *very* far superior to that of his race. Of course he would be conscious of his superiority; nor could he (if otherwise constituted as man is) help manifesting his consciousness. Thus he would make himself enemies at all points. And since his opinions and speculations would widely differ from those of *all* mankind—that he would be considered a madman is evident. How horribly painful such a condition! Hell could invent no greater torture than that of being charged with abnormal weakness on account of being abnormally strong.

In like manner, nothing can be clearer than that a *very* generous spirit—*truly* feeling what all merely profess—must inevitably find itself misconceived in every direction—its motives misinterpreted. Just as extremeness of intelligence would be thought fatuity, so excess of chivalry could not fail of being looked upon as meanness in its last degree—and so on with other virtues. This subject is a painful one indeed. That individuals *have* so soared above the plane of their race is scarcely to be questioned; but, in looking back through history for traces of their existence, we should pass over all biographies of "the good and the great," while we search carefully the slight records of wretches who died in prison, in Bedlam, or upon the gallows.

LXIII.—Fools.

I have great faith in fools—self-confidence my friends will call it:

> Si demain, oubliant d'éclore,
> Le jour manquait, eh bien! demain
> Quelque fou trouverait encore
> Un flambeau pour le genre humain.

By the way, what with the new electric light and other matters, De Béranger's idea is not so *very* extravagant.

LXIV.—Fortune.

It is certainly very remarkable that although destiny is the ruling idea of the Greek drama, the word Τυχη (Fortune) does not appear once in the whole Iliad.

LXV.—Fuller.

"Contempt," says an eastern proverb, "pierces even through the shell of the tortoise;" but the skull of a Fuller would feel itself insulted by a comparison, in point of impermeability, with the shell of a Gallipago turtle.

LXVI.—Fullerton's "Ellen Middleton."

A remarkable work, and one which I find much difficulty in admitting to be the composition of a woman. Not that many good and glorious things have not been the composition of women—but, because, here, the severe precision of style, the *thoroughness*, and the luminousness are points never observable in even the most admirable of their writings. Who is Lady Georgiana Fullerton?* Who is that Countess of Dacre,† who edited "Ellen Wareham,"—the most passionate of fictions—approached only in some particulars of passion by this? The great defect of "Ellen Middleton" lies in the disgusting sternness, captiousness, and bullet-headedness of her husband. We cannot sympathise with her love for him. And the intense selfishness of the rejected lover precludes that compassion which is designed. Alice is a *creation* of true genius. The imagination throughout is of a lofty order, and the snatches of original verse would do honour to any poet living. But the chief merit, after all, is that of the *style*—about which it is difficult to say too much in the way of praise, although it has now and then an odd Gallicism—such as "she lost her head," meaning she grew crazy. There is much in the whole manner of this book which puts me in mind of "Caleb Williams."

* The popular English novelist, author of "Grantley Manor," "Lady Bird," etc.

† Lady Dacre wrote "Recollections of a Chaperon," and is the accredited author of "Trevelyan."—*Ed.*

LXVII.—Future State.

Nearly, if not quite the best "Essay on a Future State."* The arguments called "Deductions *from* our Reason" are rightly enough addressed more to the *feelings* (a vulgar term not to be done without) than *to* our reason. The arguments deduced from Revelation are (also rightly enough) brief. The pamphlet proves nothing of course; its theorem is not to be proved.

LXVIII.—Genius.

We mere men of the world, with no principle—a very old-fashioned and cumbersome thing—should be on our guard lest, fancying him on his last legs, we insult or otherwise maltreat some poor devil of a genius at the very instant of his putting his foot on the top round of his ladder of triumph. It is a common trick with these fellows, when on the point of attaining some long-cherished end, to sink themselves into the deepest possible abyss of seeming despair for no other purpose than that of increasing the space of success through which they have made up their minds immediately to soar.

LXIX.—Genius.

All that the man of genius demands for his exaltation is moral matter in motion. It makes no difference *whither* tends the motion—whether for him or against him—and it is absolutely of *no* consequence "*what* is the matter."

LXX.—Genius.

The more there are great excellencies in a work, the less am I surprised at finding great demerits. When a Book is said to have many faults, nothing is decided, and I cannot tell by this whether it is excellent or execrable. It is said of another that it is without fault; if the account be just, the work cannot be excellent.—*Trublet.*

The "*cannot*" here is much too positive. The opinions of Trublet are wonderfully prevalent, but they are none the less demonstrably false. It is merely the *indolence* of genius

* A sermon on a Future State, combating the opinion that "Death is an Eternal Sleep." By Gilbert Austin. London. 1794.

which has given them currency. The truth seems to be that genius of the highest order lives in a state of perpetual vacillation between ambition and *the scorn of it.* The ambition of a great intellect is at best negative. It struggles —it labours—it creates—not because excellence is desirable, but because to be excelled where there exists a sense of the power to excel is unendurable. Indeed I cannot help thinking that the *greatest* intellects (since these most clearly perceive the laughable absurdity of human ambition) remained contentedly "mute and inglorious." At all events, the *vacillation* of which I speak is the prominent feature of genius. Alternately inspired and depressed, its inequalities of mood are stamped upon its labours. This is the truth, generally—but it is a truth very different from the assertion involved in the "cannot" of Trublet. Give to genius a sufficiently enduring *motive*, and the result will be harmony, proportion, beauty, perfection—all, in this case, synonymous terms. Its supposed "inevitable" irregularities shall not be found —for it is clear that the susceptibility to impressions of beauty—that susceptibility which is the most important element of genius—implies an equality exquisite sensitiveness and aversion to deformity. The motive—the *enduring* motive—has indeed, hitherto, fallen *rarely* to the lot of genius; but I could point to several compositions which, "without any fault," are yet "excellent"—extremely so. The world, too, is on the threshold of an epoch, wherein, with the aid of a calm philosophy, such compositions shall be ordinarily the work of that genius which is *true.* One of the first and most essential steps, in overpassing this threshold, will serve to kick out of the world's way this very idea of Trublet—this untenable and paradoxical idea of the incompatibility of genius with *art.*

LXXI.—Genius and Industry.

Men of genius are far more abundant than is supposed. In fact, to appreciate thoroughly the work of what we call genius is to possess all the genius by which the work was produced. But the person appreciating may be utterly incompetent to reproduce the work, or anything similar,

and this solely through lack of what may be termed the constructive ability—a matter quite independent of what we agree to understand in the term "genius" itself. This ability is based, to be sure, in great part upon the faculty of analysis, enabling the artist to get full view of the machinery of his proposed effect, and thus work it and regulate it at will, but a great deal depends also upon properties strictly moral—for example, upon patience, upon concentrativeness, or the power of holding the attention steadily to the one purpose, upon self-dependence and contempt for all opinion which is opinion and no more—in especial, upon energy or industry. So vitally important is this last that it may well be doubted if anything to which we have been accustomed to give the title of a "work of genius" was ever accomplished without it; and it is chiefly because this quality and genius are nearly incompatible that "works of genius" are few, while mere men of genius are, as I say, abundant. The Romans, who excelled us in acuteness of *observation*, while falling below us in induction from facts observed, seem to have been so fully aware of the inseparable connection between industry and a "work of genius" as to have adopted the error that industry, in great measure, was genius itself. The highest compliment is intended by a Roman when of an epic, or anything similar, he says that it is written *industriâ mirabili* or *incredibili industriâ*.

LXXII.—Genius Controlled.

A man of genius, if not permitted to choose his own subject, will do worse in letters than if he had talents none at all. And *here* how imperatively is he controlled! To be sure, he can write to suit himself—but in the same manner his publishers print. From the nature of our copyright laws, he has no individual powers. As for his free agency, it is about equal to that of the dean and chapter of the see-cathedral in a British election of Bishops—an election held by virtue of the king's writ of *congé d'élire*—specifying the person to be elected.

LXXIII.—Dearth of Genius Accounted for.

Perhaps Mr. Barrow * is right after all, and the dearth of genius in America *is* owing to the continual teasing of the musquitoes.

LXXIV.—Gentleman's Magazine.

Not so:—The first number of the "Gentleman's Magazine" was published on the first of January 1731; but long before this—in 1681—there appeared the "Monthly Recorder," with all the magazine features. I have a number of the "London Magazine," dated 1760;—commenced 1732, at least, but I have reason to think much earlier.

LXXV.—Geological Conundrum.

Talking of conundrums—Why will a geologist put no faith in the fable of the fox that lost his tail? Because he knows that no animal remains have ever been found in trap.

LXXVI.—German Literature.

This book † could never have been popular out of Germany. It is too simple—too direct—too obvious—too *bold*—not sufficiently complex—to be relished by any people who have *thoroughly* passed the first (or impulsive) epoch of literary civilisation. The Germans have not yet passed this first epoch. It must be remembered that *during the whole of the Middle Ages they lived in utter ignorance of the art of writing.* From so total a darkness, of so late a date, they could not, *as a nation*, have as yet fully emerged into the second or critical epoch. Individual Germans have been critical in the best sense—but the masses are unleavened. Literary Germany thus presents the singular spectacle of the impulsive spirit surrounded by the critical, and, of course, in some measure influenced thereby. England, for example, has advanced far, and France much farther, into the critical epoch; and their effect on the German mind is

* "Voyage to Cochin-China."

† "Thiodolf, the Icelander, and Aslauga's Knight." Wiley and Putnam's "Library of Choice Reading," Foreign Series, No. 60.

seen in the wildly anomalous condition of the German literature at large. That this latter will be improved by age, however, should never be maintained. As the impulsive spirit subsides, and the critical uprises, there will appear the polished insipidity of the later England, or that ultimate *throe* of taste which has found its best exemplification in Sue. At present the German literature resembles no other on the face of the earth—for it is the result of certain conditions which, before this individual instance of their fulfilment, have never been fulfilled. And this anomalous state to which I refer is the source of our anomalous criticism upon what that state produces—is the source of the grossly conflicting opinions about German letters. For my own part, I admit the German vigour, the German directness, boldness, imagination, and some other qualities of impulse, just as I am willing to admit and admire these qualities in the first (or impulsive) epochs of British and French letters. At the German criticism, however, I cannot refrain from laughing all the more heartily the more seriously I hear it praised. Not that, in detail, it affects me as an absurdity —but in the adaptation of its details. It abounds in brilliant bubbles of *suggestion*, but these rise and sink and jostle each other until the whole vortex of thought in which they originate is one indistinguishable chaos of froth. The German criticism is *unsettled*, and can only be settled by time. At present it suggests without demonstrating, or convincing, or effecting any definite purpose under the sun. We read it, rub our foreheads, and ask "What then?" I am not ashamed to say that I prefer even Voltaire to Goethe, and hold Macaulay to possess more of the true critical spirit than Augustus William and Frederick Schlegel combined. "Thiodolf" is called by Fouqué his "most *successful* work." He would not have spoken thus had he considered it his *best*. It is admirable of its kind—but its kind can *never* be appreciated by Americans. It will affect them much as would a grasp of the hand from a man of ice. Even the exquisite "Undine" is too chilly for our people, and, generally, for our epoch. We have less imagination and warmer sympathies than the age which preceded

us. It would have done Fouqué more ready and fuller justice than ours. Has any one remarked the striking similarity in tone between "Undine" and the "Libussa" of Musæus?

LXXVII.—God and the Soul.

After reading all that has been written, and after thinking all that can be thought on the topics of God and the soul, the man who has a right to say that he thinks at all, will find himself face to face with the conclusion that, on these topics, the most profound thought is that which can be the least easily distinguished from the most superficial sentiment.

LXXVIII.—Godwin.

With all his faults, however, this author is a man of respectable powers.

Thus discourses, of *William Godwin*, the "London Monthly Magazine," May, 1818.

LXXIX.—Miss Gould and Mrs. Howitt.

Miss Gould * has much in common with Mary Howitt —the characteristic trait of each being a sportive, quaint, epigrammatic grace that keeps clear of the absurd by never employing itself upon very exalted topics. The verbal style of the two ladies is identical. Miss Gould has the more talent of the two, but is somewhat the less original. She has occasional flashes of a far higher order of merit than appertains to her ordinary manner. Her "Dying Storm" might have been written by Campbell.

LXXX.—Grammar.

Here are both Dickens and Bulwer perpetually using the adverb "directly" in the sense of "as soon as." "Directly he came I did so and so."—"Directly I knew it I said this and that." But observe!—"Grammar is hardly taught," [in the United States] "being thought an unneces-

* Miss Hannah Flagg Gould, an American poetess, authoress of several volumes of poems (1832-1850), and prose papers, which have been collected under title of "Gathered Leaves."

sary basis for other learning." I quote "America and her Resources" by the British Counsellor-at-Law, John Bristed.

LXXXI.—A Danish Grammar.

Strange—that I should here* find the only non-execrable *barbarian* attempts at imitation of the Greek and Roman measures!

LXXXII.—Grattan's "High-ways and By-ways."

A capital book, generally speaking,† but Mr. Grattan has a bad habit—that of loitering in the road—of dallying and toying with his subjects, as a kitten with a mouse—instead of grasping it firmly at once and eating it up without more ado. He takes up too much time in the ante-room. He has never done with his introductions. Occasionally, one introduction is but the vestibule to another; so that by the time he arrives at his main incidents there is nothing more to tell. He seems afflicted with that curious yet common perversity observed in garrulous old women—the desire of tantalising by circumlocution. Mr. G.'s circumlocution, however, is by no means like that which Albany Fonblanque describes as "a style of about and about and all the way round to nothing and nonsense." . . . If the greasy-looking lithograph here given as a frontispiece be meant for Mr. Grattan, then is Mr. Grattan like nobody else—for the fact is, I never yet knew an individual with a wire wig, or the countenance of an under-done apple dumpling. . . . As a general rule, no man should put his own face in his own book. In looking at the author's countenance the reader is seldom in condition to keep his own.

LXXXIII.—Hague.

Brown, in his "Amusements," speaks of having trans-

* Forelaeseninger over det Danske Sprog, eller resonneret Dansk Grammatik ved Jacob Buden.

† Thomas Colley Grattan, an Irish Novelist, born in Dublin 1796. Mr. G. was (1839-1853), British Consul at Boston, and there wrote some of his most popular works.

fused the blood of an ass into the veins of an astrological quack—and there can be no doubt that one of Hague's progenitors was the man.

LXXXIV.—Basil Hall.

Captain Hall is one of the most agreeable of writers. We like him for the same reason that we like a good drawing-room conversationist—there is such a pleasure in listening to his elegant nothings. Not that the captain is unable to be profound. He has, on the contrary, some reputation for science. But in his hands even the most trifling personal adventures become interesting from the very piquancy with which they are told.

LXXXV.—Heber.

The qualities of Heber are well understood. His poetry is of a high order. He is imaginative, glowing, and vigorous, with a skill in the management of his means unsurpassed by that of any writer of his time, but without any high degree of originality. Can there be anything in the nature of a "classical" life at war with novelty *per se?* At all events few fine scholars, such as Heber truly was, *are* original.

LXXXVI.—Hegel on Philosophy.

"Philosophy," says Hegel, "is utterly useless and fruitless, and *for this very reason* is the sublimest of all pursuits, the most deserving attention, and the most worthy of our zeal." This jargon was suggested, no doubt, by Tertullian's "*Mortuus est Dei filius; credibile est quia ineptum—et sepultus resurrexit; certum est quia impossibile.*"

LXXXVII.—Hint to Novelists.

I cannot help thinking that romance-writers in general might now and then find their account in taking a hint from the Chinese, who, in spite of building their houses downwards, have still sense enough *to begin their books at the end.*

LXXXVIII.—Phrases ascribed wrongly to Horace and Seneca.

Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur, as the acute Seneca well observes.

However acute might be Seneca, still he was not sufficiently acute to say this. The sentence is often attributed to him, but is not to be found in his works. "*Semel insanavimus omnes*," a phrase often quoted, is invariably placed to the account of Horace, and with equal error. It is from the "*De Honesto Amore*" of the Italian Mantuanus, who has

Id commune malum ; semel insanavimus omnes.

In the title "*De Honesto Amore*," by the way, Mantuanus misconceives the force of *honestus*—just as Dryden does in his translation of Virgil's

Et quocunque Deus circum caput egit honestum ;

which he renders

On whate'er side he turns his *honest* face.

LXXXIX.—A Blunder of Mr. Hudson's.

Mr. Hudson, among innumerable blunders, attributes to Sir Thomas Browne the paradox of Tertullian in his *De Carne Christi*—"*Mortuus est Dei filius, credible est quia ineptum est ; et sepultus resurrexit, certum est quia impossibile est.*"

XC.—Idea for a Magazine Paper.

Here is a good idea for a Magazine paper—let somebody "work it up:"—A flippant pretender to universal acquirement—a would-be Crichton—engrosses for an hour or two, perhaps, the attention of a large company—most of whom are profoundly impressed by his knowledge. He is very witty, in especial, at the expense of a modest young gentleman, who ventures to make no reply, and who, finally leaves the room as if overwhelmed with confusion—the Crichton greeting his exit with a laugh. Presently he returns, followed by a footman carrying an armful of books. These are deposited on the table. The young gentleman now referring to some pencilled notes, which he had been secretly taking during the Crichton's display of erudition,

pins the latter to his statements, each by each, and refutes them all in turn, by reference to the very authorities cited by the egotist himself—whose ignorance at all points is thus made apparent.

XCI.—The Iliad.

For my part I agree with Joshua Barnes: nobody but Solomon could have written the Iliad. The catalogue of ships was the work of Robins.

XCII.—Imagination.

The *pure Imagination* chooses, from *either Beauty or Deformity*, only the most combinable things hitherto uncombined; the compound, as a general rule, partaking in character of beauty or sublimity in the ratio of the respective beauty or sublimity of the things combined—which are themselves still to be considered as atomic—that is to say, as previous combinations. But, as often analogously happens in physical chemistry, so not unfrequently does it occur in this chemistry of the intellect, that the admixture of two elements results in something that has nothing of the qualities of one of them, or even nothing of the qualities of either. . . . Thus, the range of Imagination is unlimited. Its materials extend throughout the universe. Even out of deformities it fabricates that *Beauty* which is at once its sole object and its inevitable test. But, in general, the richness or force of the matters combined; the facility of discovering combinable novelties worth combining; and especially, the absolute "chemical combination" of the completed mass—are the particulars to be regarded in our estimate of Imagination. It is this thorough harmony of an imaginative work which so often causes it to be undervalued by the thoughtless, through the character of *obviousness* which is superinduced. We are apt to find ourselves asking *why* it is that these combinations have never been imagined before.

XCIII.—James's Novels.

The author of "Richelieu" and "Darnley" is lauded, by a great majority of those who laud him, from mere

motives of duty, not of inclination—duty erroneously conceived. He is looked upon as the head and representative of those novelists who, in historical romance, attempt to blend interest with instruction. His sentiments are found to be pure—his *morals* unquestionable, and pointedly shown forth—his language indisputably correct. And for all this, praise assuredly, but then only a certain degree of praise, should be awarded him. To be pure in his expressed opinions is a duty; and were his language as correct as any spoken, he would speak only as every gentleman should speak. In regard to his historical information, were it much more accurate, and twice as extensive as, from any visible indications, we have reason to believe it, it should still be remembered that similar attainments are possessed by many thousands of well-educated men of all countries, who look upon their knowledge with no more than ordinary complacency; and that a far, very far higher reach of erudition is within the grasp of any general reader having access to the great libraries of Paris or the Vatican. Something more than we have mentioned is necessary to place our author upon a level with the best of the English novelists—for here his admirers would desire us to place him. Had Sir Walter Scott never existed, and Waverley never been written, we would not, of course, award Mr. J. the merit of being the first to blend history, even successfully, with fiction. But as an indifferent imitator of the Scotch novelist in this respect, it is unnecessary to speak of the author of "Richelieu" any farther. To genius of any kind, it seems to us, that he has little pretension. In the solemn tranquillity of his pages we seldom stumble across a novel emotion, and if any matter of deep interest arises in the path, we are pretty sure to find it an interest appertaining to some historical fact equally vivid or more so in the original chronicles.

XCIV.—Judge with the Long Ears.

Scott, in his "Presbyterian Eloquence," speaks of "that ancient fable, not much known," in which a trial of skill in singing being agreed upon between the cuckoo and the

nightingale, the ass was chosen umpire. When each bird had done his best the umpire declared that the nightingale sang extremely well, but that "for a good plain song give him the cuckoo." The judge with the long ears, in this case, is a fine type of the tribe of critics who insist upon what they call "quietude" as the supreme literary excellence—gentlemen who rail at Tennyson and elevate Addison into apotheosis.

XCV.—La Harpe's Judgment of Racine.

La Harpe, who was no critic, has, nevertheless, done little more than strict justice to the fine taste and precise finish of Racine in all that regards the minor morals of Literature. In these he as far excels Pope, as Pope the veriest dolt in his own "Dunciad."

XCVI.—"Language of Everybody."

It has been well said of the French orator Dupin that "he spoke, as nobody else, the language of everybody;" and thus his manner seems to be exactly conversed in that of the Frogpondian Euphuists, who, on account of the familiar tone in which they lisp their *outré* phrases, may be said to speak as everybody, the language of nobody—that is to say, a language emphatically their own.

XCVII.—Language—Power of Words.

Words—printed ones especially—are murderous things. Keats did (or did not) die of a criticism, Cromwell of Titus's pamphlet "Killing no Murder," and Montfleury perished of the "Andromache." The author of the "Parnasse Réformé" makes him thus speak in Hades—"*L'homme donc qui voudrait savoir ce dont je suis mort qu'il ne demande pas s'il fût de fievre ou de podagre ou d'autre chose, mais qu'il entende que ce fut de L'Andromache.*" As for myself, I am fast dying of the "*Sartor Resartus.*"

XCVIII.—The Last Page.

I have at length attained the last page, which is a thing to thank God for, and all this may be logic, but I am sure

it is nothing more. Until I get the means of refutation, however, I must be content to say, with the Jesuits Le Sueur and Jacquier, that "I acknowledge myself obedient to the decrees of the Pope against the motion of the earth."

XCIX.—Lecturing.

One-half the pleasure experienced at a theatre arises from the spectator's sympathy with the rest of the audience, and especially from his belief in their sympathy with him. The eccentric gentleman who not long ago, at the Park, found himself the solitary occupant of box, pit, and gallery, would have derived but little enjoyment from his visit had he been suffered to remain. It was an act of mercy to turn him out. The present absurd rage for lecturing is founded in the feeling in question. Essays which we would not be hired to read, so trite is their subject, so feeble is their execution, so much easier is it to get better information on similar themes out of any encyclopædia in Christendom, we are brought to tolerate, and alas, even to applaud in their tenth and twentieth repetition, through the sole force of our sympathy with the throng. In the same way we listen to a story with greater zest when there are others present at its narration beside ourselves. Aware of this, authors without due reflection have repeatedly attempted, by supposing a circle of listeners, to imbue their narratives with the interest of sympathy. At a cursory glance the idea seems plausible enough. But in the one case there is an actual, personal, and palpable sympathy, conveyed in looks, gestures, and brief comments—a sympathy of real individuals, all with the matters discussed to be sure, but then especially *each with each*. In the other instance, we, alone in our closet, are required to sympathise *with* the sympathy of fictitious listeners, who, so far from being present in body, are often studiously kept out of sight and out of mind for two or three hundred pages at a time. This is sympathy double-diluted—the shadow of a shade. It is unnecessary to say that the design invariably fails of its effect.

C.—Little Men.

To vilify a great man is the readiest way in which a little man can himself attain greatness. The Crab might never have become a Constellation but for the courage it evinced in nibbling Hercules on the heel.

CI.—The Practised Logician.

The *a priori* reasoners upon government are, of all plausible people, the most preposterous. They only argue too cleverly to permit my thinking them silly enough to be themselves deceived by their own arguments. Yet even this is possible; for there is something in the vanity of logic which addles a man's brains. Your true logician gets in time to be logicalised, and then, so far as regards himself, the universe is one *word*. A thing for him no longer exists. He deposits upon a sheet of paper a certain assemblage of syllables, and fancies that their meaning is riveted by the act of deposition. I am serious in the opinion that some such process of thought passes through the mind of the "practised" logician as he makes note of the thesis proposed. He is not aware that he thinks in this way—but, unwittingly, he so thinks. The syllables deposited acquire in his view a new character. While afloat in his brain, he might have been brought to admit the possibility that these syllables were variable exponents of various phases of thought; but he will not admit this if he once gets them upon the paper.

In a single page of "Mill" I find the word "force" employed four times; and each employment varies the idea. The fact is that *a priori* argument is much worse than useless except in the mathematical sciences, where it is possible to obtain *precise* meanings. If there is any one subject in the world to which it is utterly and radically inapplicable, that subject is Government. The *identical* arguments used to sustain Mr. Bentham's positions might, with little exercise of ingenuity, be made to overthrow them; and, by ringing small changes on the words "leg-of-mutton" and "turnip" (changes so *gradual* as to escape detection), I could "*demon-*

strate" that a turnip was, is, and of right ought to be a leg-of-mutton.

CII.—Longfellow.

Imitators are not, necessarily, unoriginal—except at the exact points of the imitation. Mr. Longfellow, decidedly the most audacious imitator in America, is markedly original, or, in other words, imaginative, upon the whole; and many persons have, from the latter branch of the fact, been at a loss to comprehend and therefore to believe, the former. Keen sensibility of appreciation—that is to say, the poetic *sentiment* (in distinction from the poetic *power*) leads almost inevitably to imitation. Thus all great poets have been gross imitators. It is, however, a mere *non distributio medii* hence to infer that all great imitators are poets.

CIII.—Literary Mosaic of Longfellow and Tasso.

One of the most singular pieces of literary Mosaic is Mr. Longfellow's "Midnight Mass for the Dying Year." The general idea and manner are from Tennyson's "Death of the Old Year," several of the most prominent points are from the death-scene of Cordelia in "Lear," and the line about the "hooded friars" is from the "Comus" of Milton. Some approach to this patchwork may be found in these lines from Tasso:

> Giace l'alta Cartago; à pena i segni
> De l'alte sui ruine il lido serba:
> Muoino le città, muoino i regni;
> Copre i fasti e le pompe arena et herba:
> E l'huom d'esser mortal per che si sdegni.

This is entirely made up from Lucan and Sulpicius. The former says of Troy:

> *Iam tota teguntur*
> *Pergama dumetis: etiam periere ruinæ.*

Sulpicius, in a letter to Cicero, says of Megara, Ægina, and Corinth—"*Hem! nos homunculi indignamur si quis nostrûm interiit, quorum vita brevior esse debet, cum uno loco tot oppidorum cadavera projecta jaceant.*"

CIV.—Longfellow's Waif.

The conclusion of the Proëm in Mr. Longfellow's late "Waif" is exceedingly beautiful. The whole poem is remarkable in this, that one of its principal excellences arises from what is generically a demerit. No error, for example, is more certainly fatal in poetry than defective *rhythm*, but here the *slipshodiness* is so thoroughly in unison with the nonchalant air of the thoughts, which again are so capitally applicable to the thing done (a mere introduction of other people's fancies) that the effect of the looseness of rhythm becomes palpable, and we see at once that here is a case in which to be *correct* would be inartistic. Here are three of the quatrains—

> I see the lights of the village
> Gleam through the rain and the mist,
> And a feeling of sadness comes over me
> That my soul cannot resist—
>
> A feeling of sadness and longing
> That is not akin to pain,
> And *resembles sorrow only*
> *As the mists resemble the rain.*
>
> And the night shall be filled with music,
> And the cares that infest the day
> Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
> *And as silently steal away.*

Now these lines are not to be scanned. They are referable to no true principles of rhythm. The general idea is that of a succession of anapæsts, yet not only is this idea confounded with that of dactyls, but this succession is improperly interrupted at all points—improperly, because by unequivalent feet. The partial prosaicism thus brought about, however (without any interference with the mere melody), becomes a beauty solely through the nicety of its adaptation to the *tone* of the poem, and of this tone, again, to the matter in hand. In his keen sense of this adaptation (which conveys the notion of what is vaguely termed "ease") the reader so far loses sight of the rhythmical imperfection that he can be convinced of its existence only by treating

in the same rhythm (or rather lack of rhythm) a subject of different tone—a subject in which decision shall take the place of nonchalance. Now, undoubtedly, I intend all this as complimentary to Mr. Longfellow, but it was for the utterance of these very opinions in the "New York Mirror" that I was accused by some of the poet's friends of inditing what they think proper to call "strictures" on the author of "Outre-Mer."

CV.—Longfellow's Waif.

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in its flight.
Proëm to Longfellow's "Waif."

The *single* feather here is imperfectly illustrative of the omniprevalent darkness, but a more especial objection is the likening of one feather to the falling of another. Night is personified as a bird, and darkness, the feather of this bird, falls from it, how? as another feather falls from another bird. Why, it does this *of course*. The illustration is identical—that is to say, null. It has no more force than an identical proposition in logic.

CVI.—Lord's "Niagara."

With the aid of a lantern, I have been looking again at "Niagara and other Poems" (Lord only knows if that be the true title)—but "there's nothing in it"—at least nothing of Mr. Lord's* own—nothing which is not stolen—or (more delicately) transfused—transmitted. By the way, Newton says a great deal about "fits of easy transmission and reflection,"† and I have no doubt that "Niagara" was put together in one of these identical fits.

* Wm. W. Lord, a native of Western New York, rector of an Episcopal church at Vicksburg.

† Of the solar rays—in the "Optics."

CVII.—Statue of Louis XV.

Talking of inscriptions—how admirable was the one circulated at Paris, for the equestrian statue of Louis XV., done by Pigal and Bouchardon—"*Statua Statuæ!*"

CVIII.—Love—"Boyish Poet-Love."

"*Les anges,*" says Madame Dudevant, a woman who intersperses many an admirable sentiment amid a chaos of the most shameless and altogether objectionable fiction—"*Les anges ne sont plus purs que le cœur d'un jeune homme qui aime en vérité.*" The angels are not more pure than the heart of a young man who loves with fervour. The hyperbole is scarcely less than true. It would be truth itself were it averred of the love of him who is at the same time young and a poet. The boyish poet-love is indisputably that one of the human sentiments which most nearly realises our dreams of the chastened voluptuousness of heaven.

In every allusion made by the author of "Childe Harold" to his passion for Mary Chaworth there runs a vein of almost spiritual tenderness and purity, strongly in contrast with the gross earthliness pervading and disfiguring his ordinary love-poems. The Dream, in which the incidents of his parting with her when about to travel are said to be delineated, or at least paralleled, has never been excelled (certainly never excelled by him) in the blended fervour, delicacy, truthfulness, and ethereality which sublimate and adorn it. For this reason it may well be doubted if he has written anything so universally popular. That his attachment for this "Mary" (in whose very name there indeed seemed to exist for him an "enchantment") was earnest and long-abiding, we have every reason to believe. There are a hundred evidences of this fact scattered not only through his own poems and letters, but in the memoirs of his relatives and cotemporaries in general. But that it *was* thus earnest and enduring does not controvert, in any degree, the opinion that it was a passion (if passion it can properly be termed) of the most thoroughly romantic, shadowy, and imaginative character. It was born of the

hour, and of the youthful necessity to love, while it was nurtured by the waters, and the hills, and the flowers, and the stars. It had no peculiar regard to the person, or to the character, or to the reciprocating affection of Mary Chaworth. Any maiden, not immediately and positively repulsive, he would have loved, under the same circumstances of hourly and unrestricted communion, such as the engravings of the subject shadow forth. They met without restraint and without reserve. As mere children they sported together; in boyhood and girlhood they read from the same books, sang the same songs, or roamed hand in hand through the grounds of the conjoining estates. The result was not merely natural or merely probable, it was as inevitable as destiny itself.

In view of a passion thus engendered, Miss Chaworth (who is represented as possessed of no little personal beauty and some accomplishments), could not have failed to serve sufficiently well as the incarnation of the ideal that haunted the fancy of the poet. It is perhaps better, nevertheless, for the mere romance of the love-passages between the two, that their intercourse was broken up in early life and never uninterruptedly resumed in after years. Whatever of warmth, whatever of soul-passion, whatever of the truer share and essentiality of romance was elicited during the youthful association is to be attributed altogether to the poet. If *she* felt at all, it was only while the magnetism of *his* actual presence compelled her to feel. If *she* responded at all, it was merely because the necromancy of *his* words of fire could not do otherwise than extort a response. In absence the bard bore easily with him all the fancies which were the basis of his flame—a flame which absence itself but served to keep in vigour—while the less ideal but at the same time the less really substantial affection of his lady-love, perished utterly and forthwith, through simple lack of the element which had fanned it into being. He to her, in brief, was a not unhandsome, and not ignoble, but somewhat portionless, somewhat eccentric, and rather lame young man. She to him was the Egeria of his dreams—the Venus Aphrodite that sprang, in full and supernal

loveliness, from the bright foam upon the storm-tormented ocean of his thoughts.

CIX.—Lowell's "Conversations."

> Here is a man who is a scholar and an artist, who knows precisely how every effect has been produced by every great writer, and who is resolved to reproduce them. But the heart passes by his pitfalls and traps, and carefully-planned springes, to be taken captive by some simple fellow who expected the event as little as did his prisoner.—Lowell's "Conversations."

Perhaps I err in quoting these words as the author's own—they are in the mouth of one of his interlocutors—but whoever claims them, they are poetical and no more. The error is exactly that common one of separating practice from the theory which includes it. In all cases, if the practice fail, it is because the theory is imperfect. If Mr. Lowell's heart be not caught in the pitfall or trap, then the pitfall is ill-concealed and the trap is not properly baited or set. One who has *some artistical ability* may know how to do a thing, and even show how to do it, and yet fail in doing it after all; but the artist and the man of some artistic ability must not be confounded. He only is the former who can carry his most shadowy precepts into successful application. To say that a critic could not have written the work which he criticises is to put forth a contradiction in terms.

CX.—Magazine Literature.

Whatever may be the merits or demerits, generally, of the Magazine Literature of America, there can be no question as to its extent or influence. The Topic—Magazine Literature—is therefore an important one. In a few years its importance will be found to have increased in geometrical ratio. The whole tendency of the age is Magazine-ward. The Quarterly Reviews have *never* been popular. Not only are they too stilted (by way of keeping up a due dignity), but they make a point, with the same end in view, of discussing only topics which are *caviare* to the many, and which, for the most part, have only a conventional interest even with the few. Their issues, also, are at too long intervals;

their subjects get cold before being served up. In a word, their ponderosity is quite out of keeping with the *rush* of the age. We now demand the light artillery of the intellect; we need the curt, the condensed, the pointed, the readily diffused—in place of the verbose, the detailed, the voluminous, the inaccessible. On the other hand, the lightness of the artillery should not degenerate into popgunnery—by which term we may designate the character of the greater portion of the newspaper press—their sole legitimate object being the discussion of ephemeral matters in an ephemeral manner. Whatever talent may be brought to bear upon our daily journals, and in many cases this talent is very great, still the imperative necessity of catching, *currente calamo*, each topic as it flits before the eye of the public must of course materially narrow the limits of their power. The bulk and the period of issue of the monthly magazines seem to be precisely adapted, if not to all the literary wants of the day, at least to the largest and most imperative, as well as the most consequential portion of them.

CXI.—Magazines.

The increase within a few years of the magazine literature is by no means to be regarded as indicating what some critics would suppose it to indicate—a downward tendency in American taste or in American letters. It is but a sign of the times—an indication of an era in which men are forced upon the curt, the condensed, the well-digested—in place of the voluminous—in a word, upon journalism in lieu of dissertation. We need now the light artillery rather than the Peace-makers of the intellect. I will not be sure that men at present think more profoundly than half a century ago, but beyond question they think with more rapidity, with more skill, with more tact, with more of method and less of excrescence in the thought. Besides all this, they have a vast increase in the thinking material; they have more facts, more to think about. For this reason, they are disposed to put the greatest amount of thought in the smallest compass and disperse it with the utmost attainable rapidity. Hence the journalism of the age; hence, in

especial, magazines. Too many we cannot have, as a general proposition; but we demand that they have sufficient merit to render them noticeable in the beginning, and that they continue in existence sufficiently long to permit us a fair estimation of their value.

CXII.—Malibran.

Upon her was lavished the enthusiastic applause of the most correct taste and of the deepest sensibility. Human triumph, in all that is most exciting and delicious, never went beyond that which she experienced—or never but in the case of Taglioni. For what are the extorted adulations that fall to the lot of the conqueror?—what even are the extensive honours of the popular author—his far-reaching fame—his high influence—or the most devout public appreciation of his works—to that rapturous approbation of the personal woman—that spontaneous, instant, present, and palpable applause—those irrepressible acclamations—those eloquent sighs and tears which the idolised Malibran at once heard, and saw, and deeply felt that she deserved? Her brief career was one gorgeous dream—for even the many sad intervals of her grief were but dust in the balance of her glory. In this book* I read much about the causes which curtailed her existence; and there seems to hang around them, as here given, an indistinctness which the fair memorialist tries in vain to illumine. She seems never to approach the full truth. She seems never to reflect that the speedy decease was but a condition of the rapturous life. No thinking person, hearing Malibran sing, could have doubted that she would die in the spring of her days. She crowded ages into hours. She left the world at twenty-five, having existed her thousands of years.

CXIII.—Michel Masson, author of "Le Cœur d'une Jeune Fille."

A corrupt and impious heart—a merely prurient fancy—a Saturnian brain in which invention has only the phos-

* "Memoirs and Letters of Madame Malibran," by the Countess of Merlin.

phorescent glimmer of rottenness. Worthless, body and soul—a foul reproach to the nation that engendered and endures him—a fetid battener upon the garbage of thought —no man—a beast—a pig—less scrupulous than a carrion-crow, and not very much less filthy than a Wilmer.

CXIV.—Menipée.

Has any one observed the excessively close resemblance in subject, thought, general manner, and particular point which this clever composition (the "*Satyre Menipée*") bears to the "Hudibras" of Butler?

CXV.—"Mesmeric Revelation" and "Valdemar Case."

One of the happiest examples, in a small way, of the carrying-one's-self-in-a-hand-basket logic is to be found in a London weekly paper, called "The Popular Record of Modern Science; a Journal of Philosophy and General Information." This work has a vast circulation, and is respected by eminent men. Sometime in November 1845 it copied from the "Columbian Magazine" of New York, a rather adventurous article of mine called "Mesmeric Revelation." It had the impudence, also, to spoil the title by improving it to "The Last Conversation of a Somnambule"—a phrase that is nothing at all to the purpose, since the person who "converses" is not a Somnambule. He is a sleep-waker—*not* a sleep-walker; but I presume that "The Record" thought it was only the difference of an *l*. What I chiefly complain of, however, is that the London editor prefaced my paper with these words:—"The following is an article communicated to the 'Columbian Magazine,' a journal of respectability and influence in the United States, by Mr. Edgar A. Poe. *It bears internal evidence of authenticity!*" There is no subject under Heaven about which funnier ideas are, in general, entertained than about this subject of internal evidence. It is by "internal evidence," observe, that we decide upon the mind. But to "The Record:"—On the issue of my "Valdemar Case," this journal copies it, as a matter of course, and (also as a matter of course) improves the title, as in the previous

instance. But the editorial comments may as well be called profound. Here they are:

The following narrative appears in a recent number of "The American Magazine," a respectable periodical in the United States. It comes, it will be observed, from the narrator of the "Last Conversation of a Somnambule," published in "The Record" of the 29th of November. In extracting this case the "Morning Post," of Monday last, takes what it considers the safe side, by remarking—"For our own parts we do not believe it; and there are several statements made, more especially with regard to the disease of which the patient died, which at once prove the case to be either a fabrication, or the work of one little acquainted with consumption. The story, however, is wonderful, and we therefore give it." The editor, however, does not point out the especial statements which are inconsistent with what we know of the progress of consumption, and as few scientific persons would be willing to take their pathology any more than their logic from the "Morning Post," his caution, it is to be feared, will not have much weight. The reason assigned by "The Post" for publishing the account is quaint, and would apply equally to an adventure from Baron Munchausen—"it is wonderful and we therefore give it." . . . The above case is obviously one that cannot be received except on the strongest testimony, and it is equally clear that the testimony by which it is at present accompanied is not of that character. The most favourable circumstances in support of it consist in the fact that credence is understood to be given to it at New York, within a few miles of which city the affair took place, and where consequently the most ready means must be found for its authentication or disproval. The initials of the medical men and of the young medical student must be sufficient in the immediate locality to establish their identity, especially as M. Valdemar was well known, and had been so long ill as to render it out of the question that there should be any difficulty in ascertaining the names of the physicians by whom he had been attended. In the same way the nurses and servants under whose cognisance the case must have come during the seven months which it occupied are of course accessible to all sorts of inquiries. It will therefore appear that there must have been too many parties concerned to render prolonged deception practicable. The angry excitement and various rumours which have at length rendered a public statement necessary, are also sufficient to show that *something* extraordinary must have taken place. On the other hand there is no strong point for disbelief. The circumstances are, as "The Post" says, "wonderful;" but so are all circumstances that come to our knowledge for the first time—and in Mesmerism everything is new. An objection may be made that the article has rather a

Magazinish air ; Mr. Poe having evidently written with a view to effect, and so as to excite rather than to subdue the vague appetite for the mysterious and the horrible which such a case, under any circumstances, is sure to awaken—but apart from this there is nothing to deter a philosophic mind from further inquiries regarding it. It is a matter entirely for testimony. [So it is.] Under this view we shall take steps to procure from some of the most intelligent and influential citizens of New York all the evidence that can be had upon the subject. No steamer will leave England for America till the 3d of February, but within a few weeks of that time we doubt not it will be possible to lay before the readers of "The Record" information which will enable them to come to a pretty accurate conclusion.

Yes ; and no doubt they came to one accurate enough in the end. But all this rigmarole is what people call testing a thing by "internal evidence." "The Record" insists upon the truth of the story because of certain facts—because "the initials of the young men *must* be sufficient to establish their identity"—because "the nurses *must* be accessible to all sorts of inquiries"—and because the "angry excitement and various rumours which at length rendered a public statement necessary, are sufficient to show that *something* extraordinary *must* have taken place." To be sure! The story is proved by these facts—the facts about the students, the nurses, the excitement, the credence given the tale at New York. And now all we have to do is to prove these facts. Ah! *they* are proved *by the story*. As for the "Morning Post," it evinces more weakness in its disbelief than "The Record" in its credulity. What the former says about doubting on account of inaccuracy in the detail of the phthisical symptoms, is a mere *fetch*, as the Cockneys have it, in order to make a very few little children believe that it, "The Post," is not quite so stupid as a post proverbially is. It knows nearly as much about pathology as it does about English grammar—and I really hope it will not feel called upon to blush at the compliment. I represented the symptoms of M. Valdemar as "severe," to be sure. I put an extreme case ; for it was necessary that I should leave on the reader's mind no doubt as to the certainty of death without the aid of the Mesmerist—but such symptoms *might* have

appeared—the identical symptoms *have appeared*, and will be presented again and again. Had "The Post" been only half as honest as ignorant, it would have owned that it disbelieved for no reason more profound than that which influences all dunces in disbelieving—it would have owned that it doubted the thing merely because the thing was a "wonderful" thing, and had never yet been printed in a book.

CXVI.—Metaphor.

In the way of original, striking, and well-sustained metaphor, we can call to mind few finer things than this—to be found in James Puckle's "Grey Cap for a Green Head:" "In speaking of the dead, so fold up your discourse that their virtues may be outwardly shown, while their vices are wrapped up in silence."

CXVII.—Mill's Propositions.

Mill says that he has "demonstrated" his propositions. Just in the same way Anaxagoras demonstrated snow to be black (which perhaps it is if we could see the thing in the proper light), and just in the same way the French advocate Linguet, with Hippocrates in his hand, demonstrated bread to be a slow poison. The worst of the matter is that propositions such as these seldom *stay* demonstrated long enough to be thoroughly understood.

CXVIII.—Mob.

The nose of a mob is its imagination. By this, at any time, it can be quietly led.

CXIX.—Modern Polytheism.

The God-abstractions of the modern polytheism are nearly in as sad a state of perplexity and promiscuity as were the more substantial deities of the Greeks. Not a quality named that does not impinge upon some one other; and Porphyry admits that Vesta, Rhea, Ceres, Themis. Proserpina, Bacchus, Attis, Adonis, Silenus, Priapus, and the Satyrs, were merely different terms for the same thing

Even gender was never precisely settled. Servius on Virgil mentions a Venus with a beard. In Macrobius, too, Calvus talks of her as if she were a man; while Valerius Soranus expressly calls Jupiter "The Mother of the Gods."

CXX.—The Montgomeries.

"Accursed be the heart that does not wildly throb, and palsied be the eye that will not weep over the woes of 'The Wanderer of Switzerland.'" —"Monthly Register," 1807.

This is "dealing damnation round the land" to some purpose;—upon the reader, and not upon the author, as usual. For my part I shall be one of the damned; for I have in vain endeavoured to see even a shadow of merit in anything ever written by either of the Montgomeries.

CXXI.—Moore.

Thomas Moore—the most skilful literary artist of his day—perhaps of any day—a man who stands in the singular and really wonderful predicament of being undervalued on account of the profusion with which he has scattered about him his good things. The brilliancy on any one page of Lalla Rookh would have sufficed to establish that very reputation which has been in a great measure self-dimmed by the galaxied lustre of the entire book. It seems that the horrid laws of political economy cannot be evaded even by the inspired, and that a perfect versification, a vigorous style, and a never-tiring fancy, may, like the water we drink and die without, yet despise, be so plentifully set forth as to be absolutely of no value at all.

CXXII.—Moral Courage.

With how unaccountable an obstinacy even our best writers persist in talking about "moral courage," as if there could be any courage that was *not* moral. The adjective is improperly applied to the subject instead of the object. The energy which overcomes fear, whether fear of evil threatening the person or threatening the impersonal circumstances amid which we exist, is of course simply a mental energy—is of course simply "moral." But in

speaking of "*moral* courage" we *imply* the existence of physical. Quite as reasonable an expression would be that of "bodily thought," or of "muscular imagination."

CXXIII.—Moralists Swallowing Pokers.

Among the moralists who keep themselves erect by the perpetual swallowing of pokers, it is the fashion to decry the "fashionable" novels. These works have their demerits; but a vast influence which they exert for an undeniable good has never yet been duly considered. "Ingenuos didicisse fideliter *libros*, emollit mores nec sinit esse feros." Now, the fashionable novels are just the books which most do circulate among the class *un*fashionable; and their effect in softening the worst callosities—in smoothing the most disgusting asperities of vulgarism, is prodigious. With the herd, to admire and to attempt imitation are the same thing. What if, in this case, the manners imitated are frippery; better frippery than brutality—and, after all, there is little danger that the intrinsic value of the sturdiest iron will be impaired by a coating of even the most diaphanous gilt.

CXXIV.—Literary Morality.

It is not *proper* (to use a gentle word), nor does it seem courageous, to attack our foe by name in spirit and in effect, so that all the world shall know whom we mean, while we say to ourselves, "I have not attacked this man by name in the eye, and according to the *letter*, of the law"—yet how often are men who call themselves gentlemen guilty of this meanness! We need reform at this point of our Literary Morality, very sorely too at another—the system of anonymous reviewing. Not one respectable word can be said in defence of this most unfair—this most despicable and cowardly practice.

CXXV.—Moses' Account of the Creation.

It is observable that, in his brief account of the Creation, Moses employs the words *Bara Elohim* (the Gods created) no less than thirty times; using the noun in the plural

with the verb in the singular. Elsewhere, however—in Deuteronomy, for example—he employs the singular, *Eloah*.

CXXVI.—Movable Houses.

Since it has become fashionable to trundle houses about the streets, should there not be some remodelling of the legal definition of reality, as "that which is permanent, fixed, and immovable, that cannot be carried out of its place?" According to this, a house is by no means real estate.

CXXVII.

Translation of the Book of Jonah into German Hexameters. By J. G. A. Muller. Contained in the "*Memorabilien*" *von Paulus*.

Here is something at which I find it impossible not to laugh; and yet, I laugh without knowing why. That incongruity is the principle of all non-convulsive laughter, is to my mind as clearly demonstrated as any problem in the "Principia Mathematica;" but here I cannot trace the incongruous. It is there, I know. Still I do not see it. In the meantime let me laugh.

CXXVIII.—Multiplication of Books an Evil.

The enormous multiplication of books in every branch of knowledge is one of the greatest evils of this age; since it presents one of the most serious obstacles to the acquisition of correct information, by throwing in the reader's way piles of lumber, in which he must painfully grope for the scraps of useful matter peradventure interspersed.

CXXIX.—Music.

Mozart declared on his death-bed that he "began to see what *may* be done in music;" and it is to be hoped that De Meyer and the rest of the spasmodists will eventually begin to understand what may *not* be done in this particular branch of the Fine Arts.

CXXX.—"Music of the Spheres."

The phrase of which our poets, and more especially our

orators are so fond, the phrase "music of the spheres" has arisen simply from a misconception of the Platonic word μουσικη, which, with the Athenians, included not merely the harmonies of tune and time but *proportion* generally. In recommending the study of "music" as "the best education for the soul," Plato referred to the cultivation of the Taste in contradistinction from that of the Pure Reason. By the "music of the spheres" is meant the agreements, the adaptations, in a word, the proportions, developed in the astronomical laws. He had *no* allusion to music in *our* understanding of the term. The word "mosaic," which we derive from μουσικη, refers, in like manner, to the proportion or harmony of *colour* observed, or which should be observed, in the department of Art so entitled.

CXXXI.—Neal's Works—Defect in their Construction

I hardly know how to account for the repeated failures of John Neal as regards the *construction* of his works. His art is great and of a high character—but it is massive and undetailed. He seems to be either deficient in a sense of completeness, or unstable in temperament; so that he becomes wearied with his work before getting it done. He always begins well—vigorously—startlingly—proceeds by fits—much at random—now prosing, now gossiping, now running away with his subject, now exciting vivid interest; but his conclusions are sure to be hurried and indistinct; so that the reader, perceiving a falling-off where he expects a climax, is pained, and, closing the book with dissatisfaction, is in no mood to give the author credit for the vivid sensations which have been aroused *during the progress* of perusal. Of all literary foibles the most fatal perhaps is that of defective climax. Nevertheless, I should be inclined to rank John Neal first, or at all events second, among our men of indisputable *genius*. Is it, or is it not a fact, that the air of a Democracy agrees better with mere Talent than with Genius?

CXXXII.—Newnham's "Human Magnetism."

A book * which puzzles me beyond measure, since, while agreeing with its general conclusions (except where it discusses *prévision*), I invariably find fault with the reasoning through which the conclusions are attained. I think the treatise grossly illogical throughout. For example—the origin of the work is thus stated in an introductory chapter:

> About twelve months since I was asked by some friends to write a paper against Mesmerism—and I was furnished with materials by a highly esteemed quondam pupil, which proved incontestably that under some circumstances the operator might be duped—that hundreds of enlightened persons might equally be deceived—and certainly went far to show that the pretended science was wholly a delusion—a system of fraud and jugglery by which the imaginations of the credulous were held in thraldom through the arts of the designing. Perhaps in an evil hour I assented to the proposition thus made—but on reflection, I found that the facts before me only led to the *direct proof* that certain phenomena might be counterfeited; and the existence of counterfeit coin is rather a proof that there is somewhere the genuine standard gold to be imitated.

The fallacy here lies in a mere variation of what is called "begging the question." Counterfeit coin is said to prove the existence of genuine—this, of course, is no more than the truism that there can be no counterfeit where there is no genuine—just as there can be no badness where there is no goodness—the terms being purely relative. But *because* there can be no counterfeit where there is no original, does it in any manner follow that any undemonstrated original exists? In seeing a spurious coin we know it to be such by comparison with coins *admitted* to be genuine; but were *no* coin admitted to be genuine, how should we establish the counterfeit, and what right should we have to talk of counterfeits at all? Now, in the case of Mesmerism, our author is merely *begging the admission.* In

* "Human Magnetism: Its Claim to Dispassionate Inquiry. Being an Attempt to show the Utility of its Application for the Relief of Human Suffering." By W. Newnham, M.R.S.L., author of the "Reciprocal Influence of Body and Mind."

saying that the existence of counterfeit proves the existence of real Mesmerism, he demands that the real *be admitted.* Either he demands this, or there is no shadow of force in his proposition—for it is clear that we can *pretend to be* that which is not. A man, for instance, may feign himself a sphynx or a griffin, but it would never do to regard as thus demonstrated the actual existence of either griffins or sphynxes. A word alone—the word "counterfeit"—has been sufficient to lead Mr. Newnham astray. People cannot be properly said to "counterfeit" *prévision,* etc., but to *feign* these phenomena. Dr. Newnham's argument of course is by no means original with *him,* although he seems to pride himself on it as if it were. Dr. More says: "That there should be so universal a fame and fear of that which never was, nor is, nor can be ever in the world, is to me the greatest miracle of all. If there had not been at some time or other true miracles, it had not been so easy to impose on the people by false. The alchemist would never go about to sophisticate metals, to pass them off for true gold and silver, unless that such a thing was acknowledged as true gold and silver in the world." This is precisely the same idea as that of Dr. Newnham, and belongs to that extensive class of argumentation which is *all point*—deriving its whole effect from epigrammatism. That the belief in ghosts, or in a Deity, or in a future state, or in anything else credible or incredible—that any such belief is universal, demonstrates nothing more than that which needs no demonstration—the human unanimity—the identity of construction in the human brain—an identity of which the inevitable result must be, upon the whole, similar deductions from similar *data.* Most especially do we disagree with the author of this book in his (implied) disparagement of the work of Chauncey Hare Townshend—a work to be valued properly only in a day to come.

CXXXIII.—North American Review.

I cannot say that I ever fairly comprehended the force of the term "*insult*" until I was given to understand, one day, by a member of the "North American Review" clique

that this journal was "not only willing but anxious to render me that justice which had been already rendered me by the 'Revue Française' and the 'Revue des Deux Mondes'" —but was "restrained from so doing" by my "invincible spirit of antagonism." I wish the "North American Review" to express *no* opinion of me whatever—for I have none of it. In the meantime, as I see no motto on its title-page, let me recommend it one from Sterne's "Letter from France." Here it is:—"As we rode along the valley we saw a herd of asses on the top of one of the mountains—how they viewed and *reviewed* us!"

CXXXIV.—Nothingness.

This "species of nothingness" is quite as reasonable at all events as any "kind of somethingness." See Cowley's "Creation," where

> An unshaped kind of something first appeared.

CXXXV.—Odours—Association.

I believe that odours have an altogether peculiar force in affecting us through association; a force differing *essentially* from that of objects addressing the touch, the taste, the sight, or the hearing.

CXXXVI.—Optical Delusion.

Von Raumer says that Enslen, a German optician, conceived the idea of throwing a shadowy figure, by optical means, into the chair of Banquo; and that the thing was readily done. Intense effect was produced; and I do not doubt that an American audience might be electrified by the feat. But our managers not only have no invention of their own, but no energy to avail themselves of that of others.

CXXXVII.—Originality.

All true men must rejoice to perceive the decline of the miserable rant and cant against originality, which was so much in vogue a few years ago among a class of microscopical critics, and which at one period threatened to degrade all American literature to the level of Flemish art.

Of puns it has been said that those most dislike who are least able to utter them; but with far more of truth may it be asserted that invectives against originality proceed only from persons at once hypocritical and commonplace. I say hypocritical—for the love of novelty is an indisputable element of the moral nature of man; and since to be original is merely to be novel, the dolt who professes a distaste for originality, in letters or elsewhere, proves in no degree his aversion for the thing in itself, but merely that uncomfortable hatred which ever arises in the heart of an envious man for an excellence he cannot hope to attain.

CXXXVIII.—Originality.

Original characters, so called, can only be critically praised as such either when presenting qualities known in real life but never before depicted (a combination nearly impossible), or when presenting qualities (moral, or physical, or both) which, although unknown, or even known to be hypothetical, are so skilfully adapted to the circumstances which surround them that our sense of fitness is not offended, and we find ourselves seeking a reason why those things *might not have been*, which we are still satisfied *are not*. The latter species of originality appertains to the loftier regions of the *Ideal*.

CXXXIX.—Ossian.

It is James Montgomery who thinks proper to style M'Pherson's "Ossian" a collection of halting, dancing, lumbering, grating, nondescript paragraphs.

CXL.—Past and Present.

It is by no means an irrational fancy that in a future existence we shall look upon what we think our present existence as a dream.

CXLI.—Paulding's "Life of Washington."

We have read Mr. Paulding's "Life of Washington" with a degree of interest seldom excited in us by the perusal of any book whatever. We are convinced by a deliberate

examination of the design, manner, and rich material of the work, that, as it grows in age, it will grow in the estimation of our countrymen, and, finally, will not fail to take a deeper hold upon the public mind, and upon the public affections, than any work upon the same subject, or of a similar nature, which has been yet written—or, possibly, which may be written hereafter. Indeed, we cannot perceive the necessity of anything farther upon the great theme of Washington. Mr. Paulding has completely and most beautifully filled the *vacuum* which the works of Marshall and Sparks have left open. He has painted the boy, the man, the husband, and the Christian. He has introduced us to the private affections, aspirations, and charities of that hero whose affections of all affections were the most serene, whose aspirations the most God-like, and whose charities the most gentle and pure. He has taken us abroad with the patriot-farmer in his rambles about his homestead. He has seated us in his study and shown us the warrior-christian in unobtrusive communion with his God. He has done all this too, and more, in a simple and quiet manner, in a manner peculiarly his own, and which, mainly because it is his own, cannot fail to be exceedingly effective. Yet it is very possible that the public may, for many years to come, overlook the rare merits of a work whose want of arrogant assumption is so little in keeping with the usages of the day, and whose striking simplicity and *naiveté* of manner give, to a cursory examination, so little evidence of the labour of composition. We have no fears, however, for the future. Such books as these before us, go down to posterity like rich wines, with a certainty of being more valued as they go. They force themselves with the gradual but rapidly accumulating power of strong wedges into the hearts and understandings of a community.

In regard to the style of Mr. Paulding's "Washington," it would scarcely be doing justice to speak of it merely as well adapted to its subject and to its immediate design. Perhaps a rigorous examination would detect an occasional want of euphony, and some inaccuracies of syntactical arrangement. But nothing could be more out of place than any

such examination in respect to a book whose forcible, rich, vivid, and comprehensive English might advantageously be held up as a model for the young writers of the land. There is no better literary *manner* than the manner of Mr. Paulding. Certainly no American, and possibly no living writer of England, has more of those numerous peculiarities which go to the formation of a happy style. It is questionable, we think, whether any writer of any country combines as many of these peculiarities with as much of that essential negative virtue, the absence of affectation. We repeat, as our confident opinion, that it would be difficult, even with great care and labour, to improve upon the general manner of the volumes now before us, and that they contain many long individual passages of a force and beauty not to be surpassed by the finest passages of the finest writers in any time or country. It is this striking character in the "Washington" of Mr. Paulding—striking and peculiar indeed at a season when we are so culpably inattentive to all matters of this nature, as to mistake for style the fine airs at second hand of the silliest romances—it is this character, we say, which should insure the fulfilment of the writer's principal design, in the immediate introduction of his book into every respectable academy in the land.

CXLII.—Perversity.

Tell a scoundrel three or four times a day that he is the pink of probity and you make him at least the perfection of "respectability" in good earnest. On the other hand, accuse an honourable man too pertinaciously of being a villain and you fill him with a perverse ambition to show you that you are not altogether in the wrong.

CXLIII.—Petrarch.

We are not among those who regard the genius of Petrarch as a subject for enthusiastic admiration. The characteristics of his poetry are not traits of the highest, or even of a high order, and in accounting for his fame the discriminating critic will look rather to the circumstances which surround the man than to the literary merits of the

pertinacious sonneteer. Grace and tenderness we grant him, but these qualities are surely insufficient to establish his poetical apotheosis.

In other respects he is entitled to high consideration. As a patriot, notwithstanding some accusations which have been rather urged than established, we can only regard him with approval. In his republican principles, in his support of Rienzi at the risk of the displeasure of the Colonna family, in his whole political conduct, in short, he seems to have been nobly and disinterestedly zealous for the welfare of his country. But Petrarch is most important when we look upon him as the bridge by which, over the dark gulf of the Middle Ages, the knowledge of the old world made its passage into the new. His influence on what is termed the revival of letters was perhaps greater than that of any man who ever lived—certainly far greater than that of any of his immediate contemporaries. His ardent zeal in recovering and transcribing the lost treasures of antique lore cannot be too highly appreciated. But for him many of our most valued classics might have been numbered with Pindar's hymns and dithyrambics. He devoted days and nights to this labour of love, snatching numerous precious books from the very brink of oblivion. His judgment in these things was strikingly correct, while his erudition, for the age in which he lived, and for the opportunities he enjoyed, has always been a subject of surprise.

CXLIV.—Error in Philosophy.

An infinity of error makes its way into our Philosophy through Man's habit of considering himself a citizen of a world solely—of an individual planet—instead of at least occasionally contemplating his position as cosmopolite proper—as a denizen of the universe.

CXLV.—Phrase—Did the Business.

Advancing briskly with a rapier, he *did the business* for him at a blow. —*Smollett.*

This vulgar colloquialism had its type among the Romans, *Et ferro subitus grassatus, agit rem.—Juvenal.*

CXLVI.—Plagiarism.

It may well be doubted whether a single paragraph of merit can be found either in the "Koran" of Laurence Sterne, or in the "Lacon" of Colton, of which paragraph the origin, or at least the germ, may not be traced to Seneca, to Plutarch (through Machiavelli), to Machiavelli himself, to Bacon, to Burdon, to Burton, to Bolingbroke, to Rochefoucault, to Balzac, the author of "La Manière de Bien Penser," or to Bielfeld, the German, who wrote in French "Les Premiers Traits de L'Erudition Universelle."

CXLVII.—A Daring Plagiarism.

A rather bold and quite unnecessary plagiarism—from a book too well known to promise impunity:—

> It is now full time to begin to brush away the insects of literature, whether creeping or fluttering, which have too long crawled over and soiled the intellectual ground of this country. It is high time to shake the little sickly stems of many a puny plant, and make its fading flowerets fall.—"Monthly Register," p. 243, Vol. 2, New York, 1807.

On the other hand—

> I have brushed away the insects of literature, whether fluttering or creeping; I have shaken the little stems of many a puny plant, and the flowerets have fallen.—Preface to D'Israeli's "Pursuits of Literature."

CXLVIII.—A Questionable Plagiarism.

A long time ago—twenty-three or four years at least—Edward C. Pinckney, of Baltimore, published an exquisite poem entitled "A Health." It was profoundly admired by the critical few, but had little circulation—this for no better reason than that the author was born *too far South.* I quote a few lines:

> Affections are as *thoughts* to her,
> *The measures of her hours*—
> Her feelings have the fragrancy,
> The freshness of young *flowers.*
> To her the better elements
> And kindlier stars have given
> *A form, so fair, that, like the air,*
> *'Tis less of Earth than Heaven.*

Now in 1842, Mr. George Hill published "The Ruins of Athens and Other Poems,"—and from one of the "Other Poems" I quote what follows:

> And thoughts go sporting through her mind
> Like children among *flowers;*
> And deeds of gentle goodness are
> *The measures of her hours.*
> In soul or face she bears no trace
> Of one from Eden driven,
> *But like the rainbow seems, though born*
> *Of Earth, a part of Heaven.*

Is this plagiarism or is it *not?*—I merely ask for information.

CXLIX.—Plagiarism from Mrs. Hemans.

In a "Hymn for Christmas," by Mrs. Hemans, we find the following stanza:

> Oh, lovely voices of the sky
> Which hymned the Saviour's birth,
> Are ye not singing still on high,
> Ye that sang "Peace on Earth?"
> To us yet speak the strains
> Wherewith, in times gone by,
> Ye blessed the Syrian swains,
> Oh, voices of the sky!

And at page 305 of "The Christian Keepsake and Missionary Annual for 1840"—a Philadelphia Annual—we find "A Christmas Carol," by Richard W. Dodson:—the first stanza running thus:

> Angel voices of the sky!
> Ye that hymned Messiah's birth,
> Sweetly singing from on high
> "Peace, Goodwill to all on earth!"
> Oh, to us impart those strains!
> Bid our doubts and fears to cease!
> Ye that cheered the Syrian swains,
> Cheer us with that song of peace!

CL.—Plagiarism—The Literary Pickpocket.

The ordinary pickpocket filches a purse, and the matter is at an end. He neither takes honour to himself, openly

on the score of the purloined purse, nor does he subject the individual robbed to the charge of pickpocketism in his own person—by so much the less odious is he, then, than the filcher of literary property. It is impossible, we should think, to imagine a more sickening spectacle than that of the plagiarist, who walks among mankind with an erecter step, and who feels his heart beat with a prouder impulse on account of plaudits which he is conscious are the due of another. It is the purity, the nobility, the ethereality of just fame, it is the contrast between this ethereality and the grossness of the crime of theft which places the sin of plagiarism in so detestable a light. We are horror-stricken to find existing in the same bosom the soul-uplifting thirst for fame and the debasing propensity to pilfer. It is the anomaly, the discord, which so grossly offends.

CLI.—Deliberate Plagiarism.

In my reply to the letter signed "Outis," and defending Mr. Longfellow from certain charges supposed to have been made against him by myself, I took occasion to assert that "of the class of wilful plagiarists nine out of ten are authors of established reputation who plunder recondite, neglected, or forgotten books." I came to this conclusion *a priori;* but experience has confirmed me in it. Here is a plagiarism from Channing; and as it is perpetrated by an anonymous writer in a monthly magazine, the theft seems at war with my assertion—until it is seen that the magazine in question is Campbell's "New Monthly" for August 1828. Channing, at that time, was comparatively unknown; and, besides, the plagiarism appeared in a foreign country, where there was little probability of detection. Channing, in his essay on Buonaparte, says:—

> We would observe that military talent, even of the highest order, is far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius, for it is not conversant with the highest and richest objects of thought. . . . Still the chief work of a general is to apply physical force—to remove physical obstructions—to avail himself of physical aids and advantages—to act on matter—to overcome rivers, ramparts, mountains, and human muscles; and these

are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest order:—and accordingly nothing is more common than to find men, eminent in this department, who are almost wholly wanting in the noblest energies of the soul—in imagination and taste—in the capacity of enjoying works of genius—in large views of human nature—in the moral sciences—in the application of analysis and generalisation to the human mind and to society, and in original conceptions on the great subjects which have absorbed the most glorious understandings.

The thief in "The New Monthly," says:—

Military talent, even of the highest *grade*, is *very* far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius, for it is *never made* conversant with the *more delicate and abstruse of mental operations.* It is used to apply physical force; to remove physical force; to remove physical obstructions; to avail itself of physical aids and advantages; and all these are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest *and rarest* order. Nothing is more common than to find men eminent in the science and practice of war, *wholly* wanting in the nobler energies of the soul; in imagination, in taste, in *enlarged* views of human nature, in the moral sciences, in the application of analysis and generalisation to the human mind and to society; or in original conceptions on the great subjects which have *occupied and* absorbed the most glorious *of human* understandings.

The article in "The New Monthly" is on "The State of Parties." The italics are mine.

Apparent plagiarisms frequently arise from an author's self-repetition. He finds that something he has already published has fallen dead—been overlooked—or that it is peculiarly *àpropos* to another subject now under discussion. He therefore introduces the passage; often without allusion to his having printed it before; and sometimes he introduces it into an anonymous article. An anonymous writer is thus, now and then, unjustly accused of plagiarism—when the sin is merely that of self-repetition. In the present case, however, there has been a deliberate plagiarism of the silliest as well as meanest species. Trusting to the obscurity of his original, the plagiarist has fallen upon the idea of killing two birds with one stone—of dispensing with all disguise but that of *decoration.* Channing says "order"—the writer in "The New Monthly" says "grade."

The former says that this order is "far from holding," etc. —the latter says it is "*very* far from holding." The one says that military talent is "*not* conversant," and so on— the other says "it is *never made* conversant." The one speaks of "the highest and richest objects"—the other of "the more delicate and abstruse." Channing speaks of "thought"—the thief of "mental operations." Channing mentions "intelligence of the *highest* order"—the thief will have it of "the highest *and rarest*." Channing observes that military talent is often "*almost* wholly wanting," etc. —the thief maintains it to be "*wholly* wanting." Channing alludes to "*large* views of human nature"—the thief can be content with nothing less than "enlarged" ones. Finally, the American having been satisfied with a reference to "subjects which have absorbed the most glorious understandings," the Cockney puts him to shame at once by discoursing about "subjects which have *occupied and* absorbed the most glorious *of human* understandings"—as if one could be absorbed without being occupied by a subject—as if "*of*" were here anything more than two superfluous letters—and as if there were any chance of the reader's supposing that the understandings in question were the understandings of frogs, or jackasses, or Johnny Bulls.

By the way, in a case of this kind, whenever there is a question as to who is the original and who the plagiarist, the point may be determined, almost invariably, by observing which passage is amplified or exaggerated in tone. To disguise his stolen horse, the uneducated thief cuts off the tail; but the educated thief prefers tying on a new tail at the end of the old one, and painting them both sky blue.

CLII.—A Plot.

Here is a plot which, with all its complexity, has no adaption—no dependency:—it is involute and nothing more —having all the air of G——'s wig, or the cycles and epicycles in Ptolemy's "Almagest."

CLIII.—Poetic License.

There lies a deep and sealed well
Within yon leafy forest hid,
Whose pent and lonely waters swell
Its confines chill and drear amid.

This putting the adjective after the noun is merely an inexcusable Gallicism; but the putting the preposition after the noun is alien to all language, and in opposition to all its principles. Such things, in general, serve only to betray the versifier's poverty of resource; and when an inversion of this kind occurs, we say to ourselves, "Here the poet lacked the skill to make out his line without distorting the natural or colloquial order of the words." Now and then, however, we must refer the error not to deficiency of skill, but to something far less defensible—to an idea that such things belong to the essence of poetry—that it needs them to distinguish it from prose—that we are poetical, in a word, very much in the ratio of our unprosaicalness at these points. Even while employing the phrase "poetic license"—a phrase which has to answer for an infinity of sins—people who think in this way seem to have an indistinct conviction that the license in question *involves a necessity of being adopted.* The true artist will avail himself of no "license" whatever. The very word will disgust him; for it says—"Since you seem unable to manage without these peccadillo advantages, you must have them, I suppose; and the world, half shutting its eyes, will do its best not to see the awkwardness which they stamp upon your poem."

Few things have greater tendency than inversion to render verse feeble and ineffective. In most cases where a line is spoken of as "forcible," the force may be referred to directness of expression. A vast majority of the passages which have become household through frequent quotation owe their popularity either to this directness, or, in general, to the scorn of "poetic license." In short, as regards verbal construction, *the more prosaic* a poetical style is the better. Through this species of prosaicism, Cowper, with scarcely one of the higher poetical elements, came very near making

his age fancy him the equal of Pope; and to the same cause are attributable three-fourths of that unusual point and force for which Moore is distinguished. It is the *prosaicism* of these two writers to which is owing their especial *quotability*.

CLIV.—Poetry.

Bielfeld, the author of "Les Premiers Traits de L'Erudition Universelle," defines poetry as "*l'art d'exprimer les pensées par la fiction.*" The Germans have two words in full accordance with this definition, absurd as it is—the terms *Dichtkunst*, the art of fiction, and *Dichten*, to feign—which are generally used for poetry and to make verses.

CLV.—Poetry.

My friend —— can never commence what he fancies a poem (he *is* a fanciful man, after all) without first elaborately "invoking the Muses." Like so many she-dogs of John of Nivelles, however, the more he invokes them, the more they decline obeying the invocation.

CLVI.—What is Poetry?

If need were, I should have little difficulty perhaps in defending a certain apparent dogmatism to which I am prone on the topic of versification.

"What is Poetry?" notwithstanding Leigh Hunt's rigmarolic attempt at answering it, is a query that, with great care and deliberate agreement beforehand on the exact value of certain leading words, *may* possibly be settled to the partial satisfaction of a few analytical intellects, but which, in the existing condition of metaphysics, never *can* be settled to the satisfaction of the majority; for the question is purely metaphysical, and the whole science of metaphysics is at present a chaos, through the impossibility of fixing the meanings of the words which its very nature compels it to employ. But as regards versification, this difficulty is only partial; for although one-third of the topic may be considered metaphysical, and thus may be mooted at the fancy of this individual or of that, still the remaining

two-thirds belong, undeniably, to the mathematics. The questions ordinarily discussed with so much gravity in regard to rhythm, metre, etc., are susceptible of positive adjustment by demonstration. Their laws are merely a portion of the Median laws of form and quantity—of relation. In respect then to any of these ordinary questions —these sillily moot points which so often arise in common criticism—the prosodist would speak as weakly in saying "this or that proposition is *probably* so and so, or *possibly* so and so," as would the mathematician in admitting that, in his humble opinion, or if he were not greatly mistaken, any two sides of a triangle were, together, greater than the third side. I must add, however, as some palliation of the discussions referred to, and of the objections so often urged with a sneer to "particular theories of versification binding no one but their inventor"—that there is really extant no such work as a Prosody *Raisonnée*. The Prosodies of the schools are merely collections of vague *laws*, with their more vague exceptions, based upon no principles whatever, but extorted in the most speculative manner from the usages of the ancients, who had *no* laws beyond those of their ears and fingers. "And these were sufficient," it will be said, "since 'The Iliad' is melodious and harmonious beyond anything of modern times." Admit this—but neither do we write in Greek, nor has the invention of modern times been as yet exhausted. An analysis based on the natural laws of which the bard of Scio was ignorant, would suggest multitudinous improvements to the best passages of even "The Iliad"—nor does it in any manner follow from the supposititious fact that Homer found in his ears and fingers a satisfactory system of rules (the point which I have just denied)—nor does it follow, I say, from this that the rules which *we* deduce from the Homeric *effects* are to supersede those immutable principles of time, quantity, etc.—the mathematics, in short of music —which must have stood to these Homeric effects in the relation of *causes*—the *mediate* causes of which these "ears and fingers" are simply the *intermedia*.

CLVII.—Poetry—Rationale of Verse.

In Colton's "American Review" for October 1845, a gentleman, well known for his scholarship, has a forcible paper on "The Scotch School of Philosophy and Criticism." But although the paper is "forcible," it presents the most singular admixture of error and truth—the one dovetailed into the other, after a fashion which is novel, to say the least of it. Were I to designate in a few words what the whole article demonstrated, I should say "the folly of not beginning at the beginning—of neglecting the giant Moulineau's advice to his friend Ram." Here is a passage from the essay in question:

> The Doctors [Campbell and Johnson] both charge Pope with error and inconsistency—error in supposing that *in English*, of metrical lines unequal in the number of syllables and pronounced in equal times, the longer suggests celerity (this being the principle of the Alexandrine :)—inconsistency, in that Pope himself uses the same contrivance to convey the contrary idea of slowness. But why in English? It is not and cannot be disputed that, in the hexameter verse of the Greeks and Latins—which is the model in this matter—what is distinguished as the "dactylic line" was uniformly applied to express velocity. How was it to do so? Simply from the fact of being pronounced in an equal time with, while containing a greater number of syllables or "bars" than the ordinary or average measure; as, on the other hand, the spondaic line, composed of the minimum number, was, upon the same principle, used to indicate slowness. So, too, of the Alexandrine in English versification. No, says Campbell, there is a difference; the Alexandrine is not in fact, like the dactylic line, pronounced in the common time. But does this alter the principle? What is the rationale of Metre, whether the classical hexameter or the English heroic?"

I have written an essay on the "Rationale of Verse," in which the whole topic is surveyed *ab initio*, and with reference to general and immutable principles. To this essay I refer Mr. Bristed. In the meantime, without troubling myself to ascertain whether Doctors Johnson and Campbell are wrong, or whether Pope is wrong, or whether the reviewer is right or *wrong*, at this point or at that, let me succinctly state what is *the truth* on the topics at issue. And *first*, the same principles, in *all* cases, govern *all* verse. What is

true in English is true in Greek. *Secondly*, in a series of lines, if one line contains more syllables than the law of the verse demands, and if nevertheless this line is pronounced in the same time, upon the whole, as the rest of the lines, then this line suggests celerity—on account of the increased rapidity of enunciation required. Thus in the Greek hexameter the dactylic lines—those most abounding in dactyls—serve best to convey the idea of rapid motion. The spondaic lines convey that of slowness. *Thirdly*, it is a gross mistake to suppose that the Greek dactylic line is "the model in this matter"—the matter of the English Alexandrine. The Greek dactylic line is of the same number of feet—bars—beats—pulsations—as the ordinary dactylic spondaic lines among which it occurs. But the Alexandrine is longer by one foot—by one pulsation—than the pentameters among which it arises. For its pronunciation it demands *more time*, and therefore, *ceteris paribus*, it would well serve to convey the impression of length or duration, and thus indirectly of slowness. I say *ceteris paribus*. But by varying conditions we can effect a total change in the impression conveyed. When the idea of slowness is conveyed by the Alexandrine, it is not conveyed by any slower enunciation of syllables—that is to say, it is not *directly* conveyed—but indirectly, through the idea of *length* in the whole line. Now if we wish to convey, by means of an Alexandrine, the impression of velocity, we readily do so by giving rapidity to our enunciation of the syllables composing the several feet. To effect this, however, we must have *more* syllables, or we shall get through the whole line too quickly for the intended time. To get more syllables, all we have to do is to use in place of iambuses what our prosodies call anapæsts.* Thus in the line

* I use the prosodial word "anapæst" merely because here I have no space to show what the reviewer will admit I have distinctly shown in the essay referred to—viz. : that the additional syllable introduced, does *not* make the foot an anapæst, or the equivalent of an anapæst, and that if it did it would spoil the line. On this topic, and on all topics connected with verse, there is not a prosody in existence which is not a mere jumble of the grossest error.

Flies o'er the unbending corn and skims along the main,

the syllables "*the unbend*" form an anapæst, and demanding unusual rapidity of enunciation, in order that we may get them in the ordinary time of an iambus, serve to suggest celerity. By the elision of *e* in *the*, as is customary, the whole of the intended effect is lost; for *th'unbend* is nothing more than the usual iambus. In a word, whenever an Alexandrine expresses celerity, we shall find it to contain one or more anapæsts—the more anapæsts, the more decided the impression. But the tendency of the Alexandrine, consisting merely of the usual iambuses, is to convey slowness—although it conveys this idea feebly, on account of conveying it indirectly. It follows, from what I have said, that the common pentameter, interspersed with anapæsts, would better convey celerity than the Alexandrine interspersed with them in a similar degree—and it unquestionably does.

CLVIII.—Poetry—Gallic Rhythm.

At Ermenonville, too, there is a striking instance of the Gallic rhythm with which a Frenchman regards the English verse. There Gerardin has the following inscription to the memory of Shenstone:

This plain stone
To William Shenstone.
In his writings he displayed
A mind natural;
At Leasowes he laid
Arcadian greens rural.

There are few Parisians, speaking English, who would find anything *particularly* the matter with this epitaph.

CLIX.—Poetry—Heroic Verse.

I have never yet seen an English heroic verse on the proper model of the Greek, although there have been innumerable attempts, among which those of Coleridge are perhaps the most absurd, next to those of Sir Philip Sidney and Longfellow. The author of "The Vision of Rubeta"

has done better, and Percival better yet, but no one has seemed to suspect that the natural preponderance of spondaic words in the Latin and Greek must in the English be supplied by art—that is to say, by a careful culling of the few spondaic words which the language affords, as, for example, here:

Man is a | complex, | compound, | compost, | yet is he | God-born.

This, to all intents, is a Greek hexameter, but then its spondees are spondees, and not mere trochees. The verses of Coleridge and others are dissonant, for the simple reason that there is no equality in time between a trochee and a dactyl. When Sir Philip Sidney writes

So to the | woods Love | runnes as | well as | rides to the | palace,

he makes an heroic verse only to the eye, for "woods Love" is the only true spondee, "runs as," "well as," and "palace," have each the first syllable long and the second short—that is to say, they are all trochees, and occupy less time than the dactyls or spondee—hence the halting. Now all this seems to be the simplest thing in the world, and the only wonder is how men professing to be scholars should attempt to engraft a verse, of which the spondee is an element, upon a stock which repels the spondee as antagonistical.

CLX.—Pope a Fool.

So violent was the state of parties in England, that I was assured by several that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward and Pope a fool. —*Voltaire.*

Both propositions have since been very seriously entertained, quite independently of all party-feeling. That Pope was a fool, indeed, seems to be an established point at present with the Crazyites—what else shall I call them?

CLXI.—Portrait-Painting.

I cannot tell how it happens, but, unless now and then, in a case of portrait-painting, very few of our artists can justly be held guilty of the crime imputed by Apelles to Protogenes—that of "being too natural."

CLXII.—Prohibition of Pleasure.

The modern reformist Philosophy, which annihilates the individual by way of aiding the mass, and the late reformist Legislation, which prohibits pleasure with the view of advancing happiness, seem to be chips of that old block of a French feudal law which, to prevent young partridges from being disturbed, imposed penalties upon hoeing and weeding.

CLXIII.—Pug Nose.

Not so:—a gentleman with a pug nose is a contradiction in terms—"Who can live idly and without manual labour, and will bear the port, charge, and *countenance* of a gentleman, he alone should be called master and be taken for a gentleman."—Sir Thomas Smith's "Commonwealth of England."

CLXIV.—Classical Pun.

Talking of puns:—"Why do they not give us quail for dinner, as usual?" demanded Count Fessis, the other day, of H——, the classicist and sportsman.

"Because at this season," replied H——, who was dozing,—"*qualis sopor fessis.*" (Quail is so poor, Fessis.)

CLXV.—Pun—Demosthenes "ad canes."

That Demosthenes "turned out very badly" appears beyond dispute from a passage in "*Meker de vet. et rect. Pron. Ling. Græcæ,*" where we read "*Nec illi* (*Demostheni*) *turpe videbatur, optimis relictis magistris, ad canes se conferre, etc. etc.*"—that is to say, Demosthenes was not ashamed to quit good society and "*go to the dogs.*"

CLXVI.—Punctuation.

That punctuation is important all agree, but how few comprehend the extent of its importance! The writer who neglects punctuation or mispunctuates is liable to be misunderstood,—this, according to the popular idea, is the sum of the evils arising from heedlessness or ignorance. It does not seem to be known that even where the sense is perfectly clear, a sentence may be deprived of half its force,

its spirit, its point, by improper punctuation. For the want of merely a comma—it often occurs that an axiom appears a paradox, or that a sarcasm is converted into a sermonoid. There is *no* treatise on the topic—and there is no topic on which a treatise is more needed. There seems to exist a vulgar notion that the subject is one of pure conventionality, and cannot be brought within the limits of intelligible and consistent *rule*. And yet, if fairly looked in the face, the whole matter is so plain that its *rationale* may be read as we run. If not anticipated I shall hereafter make an attempt at a magazine paper on "The Philosophy of Point." In the meantime let me say a word or two of *the dash*. Every writer for the press who has any sense of the accurate, must have been frequently mortified and vexed at the distortion of his sentences by the printer's now general substitution of a semicolon or a comma for the dash of the MS. The total or nearly total disuse of the latter point has been brought about by the revulsion consequent upon its excessive employment about twenty years ago. The Byronic poets were *all* dash. John Neal in his earlier novels exaggerated its use into the grossest abuse—although his very error arose from the philosophical and self-dependent spirit which has always distinguished him, and which will even yet lead him, if I am not greatly mistaken in the man, to do something for the literature of the country which the country "will not willingly," and cannot possibly, "let die." Without entering now into the *why*, let me observe that the printer may always ascertain when the dash of the MS. is properly and when improperly employed, by bearing in mind that this point represents *a second thought—an emendation*. In using it just above I have exemplified its use. The words "an emendation" are, speaking with reference to grammatical construction, put in *ap*position with the words "a second thought." Having written these latter words, I reflected whether it would not be possible to render their meaning more distinct by certain other words. Now, instead of erasing the phrase "a second thought," which is of *some* use—which *partially* conveys the idea intended—which

advances me *a step toward* my full purpose, I suffer it to remain, and merely put a dash between it and the phrase "an emendation." The dash gives the reader a choice between two, or among three or more expressions, one of which may be more forcible than another, but all of which help out the idea. It stands in general for these words—"*or, to make my meaning more distinct.*" This force *it has*—and this force no other point can have, since all other points have well-understood uses quite different from this. Therefore the dash *cannot* be dispensed with. It has its phases—its variation of the force described, but the one principle, that of second thought or emendation, will be found at the bottom of all.

CLXVII.—Pue's Grammar.

This is a queer little book,* which its author regards as "not only necessary, but urgently called for," because not only "the mass of the people are ignorant of English Grammar, but because those who profess great knowledge of it, and even those who make the teaching of it their business, will be found, upon examination, to be very far from understanding its principles."

Whether Mr. P. proceeds upon the safe old plan of *Probo meliora, deteriora sequor*—whether he is one of "the mass," and means to include himself among the ignoramuses, or whether he is only a desperate quiz—we shall not take it upon ourselves to say; but the fact is clear that, in a Preface of less than two small duodecimo pages (the leading object of which seems to be an eulogy upon one William Cobbett), he has given us some half dozen distinct instances of bad grammar.

"For these purposes," says he—that is to say—the purposes of instructing mankind and enlightening "every American youth" without exception—"for these purposes, I have written my lessons in a series of letters. A mode that affords more opportunity for plainness, familiarity, instruction, and entertainment, than any other. A mode

* "A Grammar of the English Language, in a series of Letters, addressed to every American Youth." By Hugh A. Pue. Philadelphia: Published by the Author.

that was adopted by Chesterfield in his celebrated instructions on politeness. A mode that was adopted by Smollett in many of his novels, which, even at this day, hold a distinguished place in the world of fiction. A mode that was adopted by William Cobbett, not only in his admirable treatise on English Grammar, but in nearly every work that he wrote." "To Mr. Cobbett," adds the instructor of every American youth—"to Mr. Cobbett I acknowledge myself *indebted* for the greater part of the grammatical knowledge which I possess."

Of the fact stated there can be no question. Nobody but Cobbett could have been the grammatical Mentor of Mr. Pue, whose book (which is *all* Cobbett) speaks plainly upon the point—nothing but the ghost of William Cobbett, looking over the shoulder of Hugh A. Pue, could have inspired the latter gentleman with the bright idea of stringing together four consecutive sentences, in each of which the leading nominative noun is destitute of a verb.

Mr. Pue may attempt to justify his phraseology here by saying that the several sentences quoted above, commencing with the words "A mode," are merely continuations of the one beginning "For these purposes;" but this is no justification at all. By the use of the period, he has rendered each sentence distinct, and each must be examined as such in respect to its grammar. We are only taking the liberty of condemning Mr. P. by the words of his own mouth. Turning to the page where he treats of punctuation, we read as follows:—"The full point is used at the end of every complete sentence; and a complete sentence is a collection of words making a complete sense, without being dependent upon another collection of words to convey the full meaning intended." Now, what kind of a meaning can we give to such a sentence as "A mode that was adopted by Chesterfield in his celebrated instructions on politeness," if we are to have "no dependence upon" the sentences that precede it? But, even in the supposition that these five sentences had been run into one, as they should have been, they would still be ungrammatical. For example—"For these purposes I have written my lessons in a series of letters—a mode that affords more opportunity for plainness, familiarity, instruction, and entertainment

than any other—a mode, etc." This would have been the proper method of punctuation. "A mode" is placed in apposition with "a series of letters." But it is evident that it is *not* the "series of letters" which is the "mode." It is *the writing the lessons* in a series which is so. Yet, in order that the noun "mode" can be properly placed in apposition with what precedes it, this latter must be either a noun, or a sentence, which, taken collectively, can serve as one. Thus, in any shape, all that we have quoted is bad grammar.

We say "*bad grammar*," and say it through sheer obstinacy, because Mr. Pue says we should not. "Why, what is grammar?" asks he indignantly. "Nearly all grammarians tell us that grammar is the writing and speaking of the English language correctly. What then is bad grammar? Why bad grammar must be the bad writing and speaking of the English language correctly!!" We give the two admiration notes and all.

In the first place, if grammar be only the writing and speaking the *English* language correctly, then the French, or the Dutch, or the Kickapoos are miserable, ungrammatical races of people, and have no hopes of being anything else, unless Mr. Pue proceeds to their assistance—but let us say nothing of this for the present. What we wish to assert is that the usual definition of grammar, as "the writing and speaking *correctly*," is an error which should have been long ago exploded. Grammar is an analysis of language, and this analysis will be *good* or *bad*, just as the capacity employed upon it be weak or strong—just as the grammarian be a Horne Tooke or a Hugh A. Pue. But perhaps, after all, we are treating this gentleman discourteously. His book may be merely intended as a good joke. By-the-bye, he says in his preface, that "while he informs the student, he shall take particular care to *entertain* him." Now, the truth is, we have been exceedingly entertained. In such passages as the following, however, which we find upon the second page of the Introduction, we are really at a loss to determine whether it is the *utile* or the *dulce* which prevails. We give the italics of Mr. Pue; without which

indeed, the singular force and beauty of the paragraph cannot be duly appreciated :—

"The *proper* study of English grammar, so far from being *dry*, is one of the most rational enjoyments known to us ; one that is highly calculated to rouse the dormant energies of the student ; it requiring continual mental effort ; unceasing exercise of mind. It is, in fact, the *spreading of a thought-producing plaster of Paris upon the extensive grounds of intellect !* It is the parent of idea, and great causation of reflection ; the mighty *instigator of insurrection in the interior ;* and, above all, the unflinching *champion of internal improvement !*"

We know nothing about plaster of Paris ; but the analogy which subsists between ipecac and grammar—at least between ipecac and the grammar of Mr. Pue—never, certainly, struck us in so clear a point of view as it does now.

But, after all, whether Mr. P.'s queer little book shall or shall not meet the views of "Every American Youth" will depend pretty much upon another question of high moment —whether "Every American Youth" be or be not as great a nincompoop as Mr. Pue.

CLXVIII.—Quotations Whimsically Misapplied.

The misapplication of quotations is clever, and has a capital effect when well done ; but Lord Brougham has not exactly that kind of capacity which the thing requires. One of the best hits in this way is made by Tieck, and I have lately seen it appropriated with interesting complacency in an English magazine. The author of the "Journey into the Blue Distance," is giving an account of some young ladies, not very beautiful, whom he caught *in mediis rebus*, at their toilet. "They were curling their monstrous heads," says he, "*as Shakspeare says of the waves in a storm.*"

CLXIX.—Read, the Poet-Painter.

One of our truest poets is Thomas Buchanan Read.* His most distinctive features are, first, "tenderness," or subdued passion, and secondly, fancy. His sin is imitativeness. *At present*, although evincing high capacity, he is but a copy-

* Born in Pennsylvania in 1822. Author of various poems and ballads, and one of the popular painters of America.

ist of Longfellow—that is to say, but the echo of an echo. Here is a beautiful thought which is *not* the property of Mr. Read:

> And where the spring-time sun had longer shone,
> *A violet looked up and found itself alone.*

Here again: a spirit

> Slowly through the lake descended,
> Till from her hidden form below
> The waters took a golden glow,
> *As if the star which made her forehead bright*
> *Had burst and filled the lake with light.*

Lowell has some lines very similar, ending with

> As if a star had burst within his brain.

CLXX.—Reasoning.

This reasoning is about as convincing as would be that of a traveller who, going from Maryland to New York without entering Pennsylvania, should advance this feat as an argument against Leibnitz's *Law of Continuity*, according to which nothing passes from one *state* to another without passing through all the intermediate states.

CLXXI.—Reasoning in a Circle.

Among his *eidola* of the den, the tribe, the forum, the theatre, etc., Bacon might well have placed the great *eidolon* of the parlour (or of the wit, as I have termed it in one of these Marginalia—XLVIII.), the idol whose worship blinds man to truth by dazzling him with the *apposite*. But what title could have been invented for *that* idol which has propagated, perhaps, more of gross error than all combined?—the one, I mean, which demands from its votaries that they reciprocate cause and effect—reason in a circle—lift themselves from the ground by pulling up their pantaloons—and carry themselves on their own heads, in hand-baskets, from Beersheba to Dan.

All—absolutely all the argumentation which I have seen on the nature of the soul, or of the Deity, seems to me nothing but worship of this unamiable idol. *Pour savoir ce*

qu'est Dieu, says Bielfeld, although nobody listens to the solemn truth, *il faut être Dieu même*—and to reason about the reason is of all things the most unreasonable. At least, he alone is fit to discuss the topic who perceives at a glance the insanity of its discussion.

CLXXII.—Reform—Opposition.

"If in any point," says Lord Bacon, "I have receded from what is commonly received, it hath been for the purpose of proceeding *melius* and not *in aliud*"—but the character assumed, in general, by modern "Reform" is simply that of Opposition.

CLXXIII.—Reynolds's "Miserrimus."

The author of "Miserrimus" *might have been* W. G. Simms (whose "Martin Faber" is just such a work)—but *is** G. W. M. Reynolds, an Englishman, who wrote also, "Albert de Rosanne," and "Pickwick Abroad"—both excellent things in their way.

CLXXIV.—Religion and Philosophy.

Until we analyse a religion or a philosophy in respect of its inducements, independently of its rationality, we shall never be in a condition to estimate that religion or that philosophy by the mere *number* of its adherents:—unluckily

> No Indian Prince has to his palace
> More followers than a thief to the gallows.

CLXXV.—Re-living the Old Life.

That evil predominates over good becomes evident when we consider that there can be found no aged person who would be willing to re-live the life he has already lived.—*Volney.*

The idea here is not distinctly made out, for, unless through the context, we cannot be sure whether the author means merely this—that every aged person fancies he might, in a different course of life, have been happier than

* This is incorrect. "Miserrimus" was written by F. M. Reynolds, who died at Fontainbleau in 1850.—*Ed.*

in the one actually lived, and for this reason would not be willing to live *his* life over again, *but some other life;* or whether the sentiment intended is this—that if, upon the grave's brink, the choice between the expected death and the re-living the old life were offered any aged person that person would prefer to die. The first proposition is perhaps true, but the last (which is the one designed) is not only doubtful in point of mere fact, but is of no effect, even if granted to be true, in sustaining the original proposition that evil predominates over good. It is assumed that the aged person will not re-live his life, because he *knows* that its evil predominated over its good. The source of error lies in the word "knows"—in the assumption that we can ever be really in possession of the whole knowledge to which allusion is cloudily made. But there is a *seeming*, a fictitious knowledge, and this very seeming knowledge it is, of what the life has been, which incapacitates the aged person from deciding the question on its merits. He blindly deduces a notion of the happiness of the original real life, a notion of its preponderating evil or good, from a consideration of the secondary or supposititious one. In his estimate he merely strikes a balance between *events*, and leaves quite out of the account that elastic *Hope* which is the Eos of all. Man's real life is happy, chiefly because he is ever expecting that it soon will be so. In regarding the supposititious life, however, we paint to ourselves chill certainties for warm expectations and grievances quadrupled in being foreseen. But because we cannot avoid doing this, strain our imaginative faculties as we will, because it is so very difficult, so nearly impossible a task, to fancy the known unknown, the done unaccomplished, and because (through our inability to fancy all this) we prefer death to a secondary life, does it, in any manner, follow that the evil of the properly-considered real existence *does* predominate over the good?

In order that a just estimate be made by Mr. Volney's "aged person," and from this estimate a judicious choice;—in order, again, that from this estimate and choice we deduce any clear comparison of good with evil in human existence, it will be necessary that we obtain the opinion or "choice,"

upon this point from an aged person, who shall be in condition to appreciate with precision the hopes he is naturally led to leave out of question, but which reason tells us he would as strongly experience as ever in the absolute re-living of the life. On the other hand, too, he must be in condition to dismiss from the estimate the fears which he actually feels, and which show him bodily the ills that are to happen, but which fears, again, reason assures us he would *not* in the absolute secondary life encounter. Now what mortal was ever in condition to make these allowances?—to perform impossibilities in giving these considerations their due weight? What mortal, then, was ever in condition to make a well-grounded choice? How, from an ill-grounded one, are we to make deductions which shall guide us aright? How out of error shall we fabricate truth?

CLXXVI.—Remarkable for Nothing.

A pumpkin has more angles than C——, and is altogether a cleverer thing. He is remarkable at one point only—at that of being remarkable for nothing.

CLXXVII.—Rhetorician's Rules.

> For all the rhetorician's rules
> Teach nothing but to name the tools. —*Hudibras.*

What these oft-quoted lines go to show is that a falsity in verse will travel faster and endure longer than a falsity in prose. The man who would sneer or stare at a silly proposition nakedly put, will admit that "there is a good deal in that" when "*that*" is the point of an epigram shot into the ear. The rhetorician's rules—if they *are* rules—teach him not only to name his tools, but to use his tools,—the capacity of his tools—their extent—their limit; and from an examination of the nature of the tools—(an examination forced on him by their constant presence)—force him also into scrutiny and comprehension of the material on which the tools are employed, and thus, finally, suggest and give birth to new material for new tools.

CLXXVIII.—Rhododaphne.

"Rhododaphne" (who wrote it?*) is brimful of music:—e.g.

> By living streams, in sylvan shades,
> Where wind and wave symphonious make
> Rich melody, the youths and maids
> No more with choral music wake
> Lone Echo from her tangled brake.

CLXXIX.—Rhyme.

The effect derivable from well-managed rhyme is very imperfectly understood. Conventionally, "rhyme" implies merely close similarity of sound at the ends of verse, and it is really curious to observe how long mankind have been content with their limitation of the idea. What, in rhyme, first and principally pleases, may be referred to the human sense or appreciation of *equality*—the common element, as might be easily shown, of all the gratification we derive from music in its most extended sense—very especially in its modifications of metre and rhythm. We see, for example, a crystal, and are immediately interested by the equality between the sides and angles of one of its faces—but, on bringing to view a second face, in all respects similar to the first, our pleasure seems to be *squared*—on bringing to view a third, it appears to be *cubed*, and so on: I have no doubt, indeed, that the delight experienced, if measurable, would be found to have exact mathematical relations, such, or nearly such, as I suggest—that is to say, as far as a certain point, beyond which there would be a decrease in similar relations. Now here, as the ultimate result of analysis, we reach the sense of mere *equality*, or rather the human delight in this sense; and it was an instinct, rather than a clear comprehension of this delight as a principle, which, in the first instance, led the poet to attempt an increase of the effect arising from the mere similarity (that is to say equality) between two sounds—led him, I say, to attempt

* Thomas Love Peacock, author of "Palmyra, and other Poems," "Headlong Hall," and other clever novels.—*Ed.*

increasing this effect by making a secondary equalisation, in placing the rhymes at equal distances—that is, at the ends of lines of equal length. In this manner, rhyme and the termination of the line grew connected in men's thoughts—grew into a conventionalism—the principle being lost sight of altogether. And it was simply because Pindaric verses had before this epoch existed—*i.e.* verses of unequal length—that rhymes were subsequently found at unequal distances. It was for this reason solely, I say—for none more profound. Rhyme had come to be regarded as of right appertaining to the *end* of verse—and here we complain that the matter has finally rested. But it is clear that there was much more to be considered. So far, the sense of *equality* alone entered the effect; or, if this equality was slightly varied, it was varied only through an accident—the accident of the existence of Pindaric metres. It will be seen that the rhymes were always *anticipated*. The eye, catching the end of a verse, whether long or short, expected, for the ear, a rhyme. The great element of unexpectedness was not dreamed of—that is to say, of novelty—of originality. "But," says Lord Bacon (how justly!) "there is no exquisite beauty without some *strangeness* in the proportions." Take away this element of strangeness—of unexpectedness—of novelty—of originality—call it what we will—and all that is *ethereal* in loveliness is lost at once. We lose—we miss the *unknown*—the vague—the uncomprehended because offered before we have time to examine and comprehend. We lose, in short, all that assimilates the beauty of earth with what we dream of the beauty of Heaven. Perfection of rhyme is attainable only in the combination of the two elements, Equality and Unexpectedness. But as evil cannot exist without good, so unexpectedness must arise from expectedness. We do not contend for mere *arbitrariness* of rhyme. In the first place, we must have equi-distant or regularly recurring rhymes to form the basis, expectedness, out of which arises the element unexpectedness, by the introduction of rhymes, not arbitrarily, but with an eye to the greatest amount of unexpectedness. We should not introduce them, for example, at such points

that the entire line is a multiple of the syllables preceding the points. When, for instance, I write—

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain,

I produce more, to be sure, but not remarkably more than the ordinary effect of rhymes regularly recurring at the ends of lines; for the number of syllables in the whole verse is merely a multiple of the number of syllables preceding the rhyme introduced at the middle, and there is still left therefore a certain degree of expectedness. What there is of the element unexpectedness, is addressed, in fact, to the eye only—for the ear divides the verse into two ordinary lines, thus:

And the silken, sad, uncertain
Rustling of each purple curtain.

I obtain, however, the whole effect of unexpectedness when I write—

Thrilled me, *filled* me with fantastic terrors never felt before.

N.B.—It is very commonly supposed that rhyme, as it now ordinarily exists, is of modern invention—but see the "Clouds of Aristophanes." Hebrew verse, however, did *not* include it—the terminations of the lines, where most distinct, never showing any thing of the kind.

CLXXX.—Right and Wrong.

"This is right," says Epicurus, "precisely because the people are displeased with it."

"*Il y a à parier*," says Chamfort—one of the *Kamkars* of Mirabeau—"*que toute idée publique—toute convention reçue —est une sottise car elle a convenue au plus grand nombre.*"

"*Si proficere cupis*," says the great African bishop, "*primo id verum puta quod sana mens omnium hominum attestatur.*" Now,

Who shall decide where Doctors disagree?

To me it appears that, in all ages, the *most* preposterous falsities have been received as truths by at least the "*mens* omnium hominum." As for the "*sana* mens"—how are we ever to determine what that is?

CLXXXI.—St. Austin *de libris Manichæis.*

In reading some books we occupy ourselves chiefly with the thoughts of the author; in perusing others, exclusively with our own. And this is one of the "others"—a suggestive book. But there are two classes of suggestive books—the positively and the negatively suggestive. The former suggest by what they say; the latter by what they might and should have said. It makes little difference, after all. In either case the true book-purpose is answered.

CLXXXII.—Sallust.

Sallust, too. He had much the same free-and-easy idea, and Metternich himself could not have quarrelled with his "*Impune quæ libet facere id est esse regem.*"

CLXXXIII.—Schwärmerei.

The German "*Schwärmerei*"—not exactly "humbug," but "sky-rocketing"—seems to be the only term by which we can conveniently designate that peculiar style of criticism which has lately come into fashion, through the influence of certain members of the *Fabian* family—people who live (upon beans) about Boston.

CLXXXIV.—Broad Scotch.

In the sweet "Lily of Nithsdale" we read---

> She's gane to dwell in heaven, my lassie—
> She's gane to dwell in heaven;
> Ye're ow're pure, quo' the voice of God,
> For dwelling out o' heaven.

The *ow're* and the *o'* of the two last verses should be Anglicised. The Deity at least should be supposed to speak so as to be understood, although I am aware that a folio has been written to demonstrate broad Scotch as the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

CLXXXV.—Seat of the Soul.

They have ascertained in China that the abdomen is the seat of the soul; and the acute Greeks considered it a waste of words to employ more than a single term, φρενες, for the expression both of the mind and of the diaphragm.

CLXXXVI.—Simms.

It was a pile of the oyster which yielded the precious pearls of the South, and the artist had judiciously painted some with their lips parted, and showing within the large precious fruit in the attainment of which Spanish cupidity had already proved itself capable of every peril, as well as every crime. At once true and poetical, no comment could have been more severe, etc.—Simms' *Damsel of Darien.**

Body of Bacchus!—only think of poetical beauty in the countenance of a gaping oyster.

And how natural, in an age so fanciful, to believe that the stars and starry groups beheld in the new world for the first time by the native of the old were especially assigned for its government and protection.

Now, if by the old world be meant the east, and by the new world the west, I am at a loss to know what *are* the stars seen in the one which cannot be equally seen in the other. Mr. Simms has abundant faults—or had;—among which inaccurate English, a proneness to revolting images, and pet phrases, are the most noticeable. Nevertheless, leaving out of the question Brockden Brown and Hawthorne (who are each a *genus*), he is immeasurably the best writer of fiction in America. He has more vigour, more imagination, more movement, and more general capacity than all our novelists (save Cooper) combined.

CLXXXVII.—Simms' "Damsel of Darien."

A ballad entitled "*Indian Serenade*," and put into the mouth of the hero, Vesco Nunez, is perhaps the most really meritorious portion of Mr. Simms' "Damsel of Darien." This stanza is full of music:

* Published at Philadelphia, 1839. Wm. Gilmore Simms, LL.D (born 1806), is one of the most prolific and popular authors of America.

And their wild and mellow voices
 Still to hear along the deep,
Every brooding star rejoices,
 While the billow, on its pillow,
Lulled to silence seems to sleep.

And also this:

'Tis the wail for life they waken
 By Samana's yielding shore—
With the tempest it is shaken;
 The wild ocean is in motion,
And the song is heard no more.

CLXXXVIII.—Soaring above Nature.

"He that is born to be a man," says Wieland in his "Peregrinus Proteus," "neither should nor can be anything nobler, greater, or better than a man." The fact is, that in efforts to soar above our nature we invariably fall below it. Your reformist demigods are merely devils turned inside out.

CLXXXIX.—Sound and Sense Principle.

The concord of sound-and-sense principle was never better exemplified than in these lines *:—

Ast amans charæ thalamum puellæ
Deserit flens, et tibi verba dicit
Aspera, amplexu teneræ cupito a—
 —vulsus amicæ.

CXC.—Southey's "Doctor."

The "Doctor" has excited great attention in America as well as in England, and has given rise to every variety of conjecture and opinion, not only concerning the author's individuality, but in relation to the meaning, purpose, and character of the book itself. It is now said to be the work of one author—now of two, three, four, five—as far even as nine or ten. These writers are sometimes thought to have composed the "Doctor" conjointly—sometimes to have written each a portion. These individual portions have even been

* By M. Anton Flaminius, b. 1498—d. 1550.

pointed out by the supremely acute, and the names of their respective fathers assigned. Supposed discrepancies of taste and manner, together with the prodigal introduction of mottoes, and other scraps of erudition (apparently beyond the compass of a single individual's reading) have given rise to this idea of a multiplicity of writers—among whom are mentioned in turn all the most witty, all the most eccentric, and especially all the most learned of Great Britain. Again —in regard to the nature of the book. It has been called an imitation of Sterne—an august and most profound exemplification, under the garb of eccentricity, of some all-important moral law—a true, under guise of a fictitious, biography—a simple *jeu d'esprit*—a mad farrago by a Bedlamite, and a great multiplicity of other equally fine names and hard. Undoubtedly, the best method of arriving at a decision in relation to a work of this nature, is to read it through with attention, and thus see what can be made of it. We have done so, and can make nothing of it, and are therefore clearly of opinion that the "Doctor" is precisely—nothing. We mean to say that it is nothing better than *a hoax.*

That any serious truth is meant to be inculcated by a tissue of bizarre and disjointed rhapsodies, whose *general* meaning no person can fathom, is a notion altogether untenable, unless we suppose the author a madman. But there are none of the proper evidences of madness in the book—while of mere *banter* there are instances innumerable. One-half, at least, of the entire publication is taken up with palpable quizzes, reasonings in a circle, sentences, like the nonsense verses of Du Bartas, evidently framed to mean nothing, while wearing an air of profound thought, and grotesque speculations in regard to the probable excitement to be created by the book.

It appears to have been written with a sole view (or nearly with the sole view) of exciting inquiry and comment. That this object should be fully accomplished cannot be thought very wonderful when we consider the excessive trouble taken to accomplish it by vivid and powerful intellect. That the "Doctor" is the offspring of such intellect

is proved sufficiently by many passages of the book, where the writer appears to have been led off from his main design. That it is written by more than one man should not be deduced either from the apparent immensity of its erudition, or from discrepancies of style. That man is a desperate mannerist who cannot vary his style *ad infinitum;* and although the book *may* have been written by a number of learned *bibliophagi*, still there is, we think, nothing to be found in the book itself at variance with the possibility of its being written by any one individual of even mediocre reading. Erudition is only certainly known in its *total* results. The mere grouping together of mottoes from the greatest multiplicity of the rarest works, or even the apparently natural inweaving into any composition, of the sentiments and manner of these works, are attainments within the reach of any well-informed, ingenious, and industrious man having access to the great libraries of London. Moreover, while a single individual possessing these requisites and opportunities might, through a rabid desire of *creating a sensation*, have written, with some trouble, the "Doctor," it is by no means easy to imagine that a plurality of sensible persons could be found willing to embark in such absurdity from a similar, or indeed from any imaginable inducement.

The present edition of the Harpers consists of two volumes in one. Volume one commences with a *Prelude of Mottoes* occupying two pages. Then follows a *Postscript*—then a *Table of Contents to the first volume*, occupying eighteen pages. Volume two has a similar *Prelude of Mottoes* and *Table of Contents*. The whole is subdivided into Chapters Ante-Initial, Initial, and Post-Initial, with Inter-Chapters. The pages have now and then a typographical *queerity*—a monogram, a scrap of grotesque music, old English, etc. Some characters of this latter kind are printed with coloured ink in the British edition, which is gotten up with great care. All these oddities are in the manner of Sterne, and some of them are exceedingly well conceived. The work professes to be a Life of one Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs—but we should put no very great faith in

this biography. On the back of the book is a monogram—which appears again once or twice in the text, and whose solution is a fertile source of trouble with all readers. This monogram is a triangular pyramid; and as, in geometry, the solidity of every polyhedral body may be computed by dividing the body into pyramids, the pyramid is thus considered as the base or essence of every polyhedron. The author, then, after his own fashion, may mean to imply that his book is the basis of all solidity or wisdom—or perhaps, since the polyhedron is not only a solid, but a solid terminated by *plane faces*, that the "Doctor" is the very essence of all that spurious wisdom which will terminate in just nothing at all—in a hoax, and a consequent multiplicity of *blank visages*. The wit and humour of the "Doctor" have seldom been equalled. We cannot think Southey wrote it, but have no idea who did.

CXCI.—Statistics.

Here is a book of "amusing travels," which is full enough of statistics to have been the joint composition of Messieurs Busching, Hassel, Cannabitch, Gaspari, Gutsmuth, and company.

CXCII.—Street's Poems.*

As a descriptive poet, Mr. Street is to be highly commended. He not only describes with force and fidelity—giving us a clear conception of the thing described—but never describes what to the poet should be nondescript. He appears, however, not at any time to have been aware that *mere* description is not poetry at all. We demand creation—ποιησις. About Mr. Street there seems to be no spirit. He is all matter—substance—what the chemists would call "simple substance"—and exceedingly simple it is.

* Alfred B. Street, American author, wrote "The Burning of Schenectady, and other Poems," 1842; "Drawings and Tintings," 1844; "Fugitive Poems," 1846, etc.

CXCIII.—Sue's "Mysteries of Paris."

I have just finished the "Mysteries of Paris"—a work of unquestionable power—a museum of novel and ingenious incident—a paradox of childish folly and consummate skill. It has this point in common with all the "convulsive" fictions—that the incidents are *consequential* from the premises, while the premises themselves are laughably incredible. Admitting, for instance, the possibility of such a man as Rodolphe, and of such a state of society as would tolerate his perpetual interference, we have no difficulty in agreeing to admit the possibility of his accomplishing all that is accomplished. Another point which distinguishes the Sue school is the total want of the *ars celare artem*. In effect the writer is always saying to the reader, "Now—in one moment—you shall see what you shall see. I am about to produce on you a remarkable impression. Prepare to have your imagination, or your pity, greatly excited." The wires are not only not concealed, but displayed as things to be admired, equally with the puppets they set in motion. The result is, that in perusing, for example, a pathetic chapter in the "Mysteries of Paris" we say to ourselves, without shedding a tear—"Now, here is something which will be sure to move every reader to tears." The philosophical motives attributed to Sue are absurd in the extreme. His first, and in fact his sole object, is to make an exciting, and therefore saleable book. The cant (implied or direct) about the amelioration of society, etc., is but a very usual trick among authors, whereby they hope to add such a tone of dignity or utilitarianism to their pages as shall gild the pill of their licentiousness. The *ruse* is even more generally employed by way of engrafting a meaning upon the otherwise unintelligible. In the latter case, however, this *ruse* is an afterthought, manifested in the shape of a moral, either appended (as in Æsop) or dovetailed into the body of the work, piece by piece, with great care, but never without leaving evidence of its after-insertion.

The translation (by C. H. Town) is very imperfect, and, by a too literal rendering of idioms, contrives to destroy the

whole *tone* of the original. Or, perhaps, I should say a too literal rendering of *local peculiarities of phrase.* There is one point (never yet, I believe, noticed) which, obviously, should be considered in translation. We should so render the original that *the version should impress the people for whom it is intended, just as the original impresses the people for whom it (the original) is intended.* Now, if we rigorously translate mere local idiosyncrasies of phrase (to say nothing of idioms) we inevitably distort the author's designed impression. We are sure to produce a whimsical, at least, if not always a ludicrous effect—for novelties, in a case of this kind, are incongruities—oddities. A distinction of course should be observed between those peculiarities of phrase which appertain to the nation and those which belong to the author himself—for these latter will have a similar effect upon *all* nations, and should be literally translated. It is merely the general inattention to the principle here proposed which has given rise to so much international depreciation, if not positive contempt, as regards literature. The English reviews, for example, have abundant allusions to what they call the "frivolousness" of French letters—an idea chiefly derived from the impression made by the French manner merely—this manner, again, having in it nothing *essentially* frivolous, but affecting all foreigners as such (the English especially) through that oddity of which I have already assigned the origin. The French return the compliment, complaining of the British *gaucherie* in style. The phraseology of every nation has a taint of *drollery* about it in the ears of every other nation speaking a different tongue. Now, to convey the true spirit of an author, this taint should be corrected in translation. We should pride ourselves less upon literality and more upon dexterity at paraphrase. Is it not clear that, by such dexterity, *a translation may be made to convey to a foreigner a juster conception of an original than could the original itself?*

The distinction I have made between mere idioms (which, *of course*, should never be literally rendered) and "local idiosyncrasies of *phrase*," may be exemplified by a passage at page 291 of Mr. Town's translation :

Never mind! Go in there! You will take the cloak of Calebasse. You will wrap yourself in it, etc. etc.

These are the words of a lover to his mistress, and are meant kindly, although imperatively. They embody a local peculiarity—a *French* peculiarity of phrase, and (to French ears) convey nothing dictatorial. To our own, nevertheless, they sound like the command of a military officer to his subordinate, and thus produce an effect quite different from that intended. The translation, in such case, should be a bold paraphrase. For example:—"I must insist upon your wrapping yourself in the cloak of Calebasse."

Mr. Town's version of "The Mysteries of Paris," however, is not objectionable on the score of excessive literality alone, but abounds in misapprehensions of the author's meaning. One of the strangest errors occurs at page 368, where we read:

"From a wicked, brutal savage, and riotous rascal, he has made me a kind of honest man by saying only two words to me; but these words, 'voyez vous,' were like magic."

Here "voyez vous" are made to be the two magical words spoken; but the translation should run—"these words, do you see? were like magic." The actual words described as producing the magical effect are "heart" and "honour."

Of similar character is a curious mistake at page 245.

"He is a *gueux fini*, and an attack will not save him," added Nicholas. "A—yes," said the widow."

Many readers of Mr. Town's translation have no doubt been puzzled to perceive the force or relevancy of the widow's "A—yes" in this case. I have not the original before me, but take it for granted that it runs thus, or nearly so:—"*il est un gueux fini et un assaut ne l'intimidera pas.*" "*Un—oui!*" *dit la veuve.*

It must be observed that, in vivacious French colloquy, the *oui* seldom implies assent to the letter, but generally to the spirit, of a proposition. Thus a Frenchman usually says "yes" where an Englishman would say "no." The

latter's reply for example, to the sentence "An attack will not intimidate him," would be "No"—that is to say, "I grant you that it would not." The Frenchman, however, answers "Yes"—meaning, "I agree with what you say—it would not." Both replies, of course, reaching the same point, although by opposite routes. With this understanding, it will be seen that the true version of the widow's "*Un—oui!*" should be, "*One* attack, I grant you, might not," and that this *is* the version becomes apparent when we read the words immediately following—"but *every* day —*every* day it is hell!"

An instance of another class of even more reprehensible blunders, is to be found on page 297, where Bras-Rouge is made to say to a police officer—"No matter; it is not of that I complain; every trade has its *disagreements.*" Here no doubt the French is *désagrémens*—inconveniences—disadvantages—unpleasantnesses. *Désagrémens* conveys disagreements not even so nearly as, in Latin, *religio* implies religion.

I was not a little surprised, in turning over these pages to come upon the admirable, thrice admirable story, called "Gringalet et Coupe en Deux," which is related by *Pique-Vinaigre* to his companions in *La Force.* Rarely have I read anything of which the exquisite *skill* so delighted me. For my soul I could not suggest a fault in it—except, perhaps, that the intention of telling a *very* pathetic story is a little too transparent.

But I say that I was *surprised* in coming upon this story —and I *was* so, because one of its points has been suggested to M. Sue by a tale of my own. *Coupe en Deux* has an ape remarkable for its size, strength, ferocity, and propensity to imitation. Wishing to commit a murder so cunningly that discovery would be impossible, the master of this animal teaches it to imitate the functions of a barber, and incites it to cut the throat of a child, under the idea that, when the murder is discovered, it will be considered the uninstigated deed of the ape.

On first seeing this, I felt apprehensive that some of my friends would accuse me of plagiarising from it my

"Murders in the Rue Morgue." But I soon called to mind that this latter was first published in "Graham's Magazine" for April 1841. Some years ago "The Paris Charivari" copied my story with complimentary comments; objecting, however, to the *Rue Morgue* on the ground that no such street (to the Charivari's knowledge) existed in Paris. I do not wish of course to look upon M. Sue's adaptation of my property in any other light than that of a compliment. The similarity *may* have been entirely accidental.

CXCIV.—Swedenborgian Credulity.

The Swedenborgians inform me that they have discovered all that I said in a magazine article entitled "Mesmeric Revelation" to be absolutely true, although at first they were very strongly inclined to doubt my veracity, a thing which, in that particular instance, I never dreamed of not doubting myself. The story is a pure fiction from beginning to end.

CXCV.—Tales.

In the tale proper—where there is no space for development of character or for great profusion and variety of incident—mere *construction* is, of course, far more imperatively demanded than in the novel. Defective plot, in this latter may escape observation, but in the tale, never. Most of our tale-writers, however, neglect the distinction. They seem to begin their stories without knowing how they are to end; and their ends, generally,—like so many governments of Trinculo—appear to have forgotten their beginnings.

CXCVI.—Tennyson.

I am not sure that Tennyson is not the greatest of poets. The uncertainty attending the public conception of the term "poet" alone prevents me from demonstrating that he *is*. Other bards produce effects which are, now and then, otherwise produced than by what we call poems; but Tennyson an effect which only a poem does. His alone are idiosyncratic poems. By the enjoyment or non-enjoyment of the "Morte D'Arthur," or of the "Œnone," I would test any

one's ideal sense. There are passages in his works which rivet a conviction I had long entertained, that the *indefinite* is an element in the true ποιησις. Why do some persons fatigue themselves in attempts to unravel such fantasy-pieces as the "Lady of Shalott?" As well unweave the "*ventus textilis.*" If the author did not deliberately propose to himself a suggestive indefinitiveness of meaning with the view of bringing about a definitiveness of vague and therefore of spiritual *effect*—this at least arose from the silent analytical promptings of that poetic genius which, in its supreme development, embodies all orders of intellectual capacity. I *know* that indefinitiveness is an element of the true music —I mean of the true musical expression. Give to it any undue decision—imbue it with any very determinate tone —and you deprive it at once of its ethereal, its ideal, its intrinsic and essential character. You dispel its luxury of dream. You dissolve the atmosphere of the mystic upon which it floats. You exhaust it of its breath of faëry. It now becomes a tangible and easily appreciable idea—a thing of the earth, earthy. It has not, indeed, lost its power to please, but all which I consider the distinctiveness of that power. And to the uncultivated talent, or to the unimaginative apprehension, this deprivation of its most delicate air will be, not unfrequently, a recommendation. A determinateness of expression is sought—and often by composers who should know better—is sought as a beauty rather than rejected as a blemish. Thus we have, even from high authorities, attempts at absolute *imitation* in music. Who can forget the silliness of the "Battle of Prague?" What man of taste but must laugh at the interminable drums, trumpets, blunderbusses, and thunder? "*Vocal* music," say L'Abbate Gravina, who would have said the same thing of instrumental, "ought to imitate the natural language of the human feelings and passions, rather than the warblings of Canary birds, which our singers, now-a-days, affect so vastly to mimic with their quaverings and boasted cadences." This is true only so far as the "rather" is concerned. If any music must imitate anything, it were assuredly better to limit the imitation as Gravina suggests. Tennyson's shorter pieces

abound in minute rhythmical lapses sufficient to assure me that—in common with all poets living or dead—he has neglected to make precise investigation of the principles of metre ; but, on the other hand, so perfect is his rhythmical instinct in general that, like the present Viscount Canterbury, he seems *to see with his ear.*

CXCVII.—A Supposed Modern Term "High-Binder."

As to this last term ("high-binder") which is so confidently quoted as modern ("not in use, *certainly*, before 1819,") I can refute all that is said by referring to a journal in my own possession—"The Weekly Inspector," for December 27, 1806—published in New York :

> On Christmas Eve a party of banditti, amounting, it is stated, to forty or fifty members of an association calling themselves "*High-Binders*," assembled in front of St. Peter's Church, in Barclay Street, expecting that the Catholic ritual would be performed with a degree of pomp and splendour which has usually been omitted in this city. These ceremonies, however, not taking place, the High-Binders manifested great displeasure.

In a subsequent number, the association are called "Hide-Binders." They were Irish.

CXCVIII.—Thinking.

I believe it is Montaigne who says—"People talk about thinking, but for my part I never begin to think until I sit down to write." A better plan for him would have been never to sit down to write until he had made an end of thinking.

CXCIX.—Tickell.

Macaulay, in his just admiration of Addison, over-rates Tickell, and does not seem to be aware how much the author of the "Elegy" is indebted to French models. Boileau, especially, he robbed without mercy and without measure. A flagrant example is here. Boileau has the lines :

> *En vain contre "Le Cid" un ministre se ligue;*
> *Tout Paris pour Chiméne a les yeux de Rodrigue.*

Tickell thus appropriates them:

> While the charm'd reader with thy thought complies,
> And views thy Rosamond with Henry's eyes.

CC.—Suggested Title—"Heart Laid Bare."

If any ambitious man have a fancy to revolutionise at one effort the universal world of human thought, human opinion, and human sentiment, the opportunity is his own —the road to immortal renown lies straight, open, and unencumbered before him. All that he has to do is to write and publish a very little book. Its title should be simple—a few plain words—"My Heart Laid Bare." But —this little book must be *true to its title.*

Now, is it not very singular that, with the rabid thirst for notoriety which distinguishes so many of mankind—so many, too, who care not a fig what is thought of them after death, there should not be found one man having sufficient hardihood to write this little book? To *write*, I say. There are ten thousand men who, if the book were once written, would laugh at the notion of being disturbed by its publication during their life, and who could not even conceive *why* they should object to its being published after their death. But to write it—*there* is the rub. No man dare write it. No man ever will dare write it. No man *could* write it, even if he dared. The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen.

CCI.—Travels.

When ——— and ——— *pavoneggiarsi* about the celebrated personages whom they have "seen" in their travels, we shall not be far wrong in inferring that these celebrated personages were seen ἐκας—as Pindar says he "saw" Archilochus, who died ages before the former was born.

CCII.—Travelling.

"What does a man learn by travelling?" demanded Doctor Johnson one day in a great rage—"What did Lord Charlemont learn in his travels, except that there was a

snake in one of the pyramids of Egypt?"—but had Doctor Johnson lived in the days of the Silk Buckinghams, he would have seen that, so far from thinking anything of finding a snake in a pyramid, your traveller would take his oath at a moment's notice of having found a pyramid in a snake.

CCIII.—Travelling on Horseback to Heaven.

The ancients had at least half an idea that we travelled on horseback to heaven. See a passage of Passeri, "*de animæ transvectione*"—quoted by Caylus. See, also, many old tombs.

CCIV.—Trivial Details.

In examining trivial details we are apt to overlook essential generalities. Thus M——, in making a to-do about the "typographical mistakes" in his book, has permitted the printer to escape a scolding which he *did* richly deserve—a scolding for a "typographical mistake" of really vital importance—the mistake of having printed the book at all.

CCV.—Tucker.

"George Balcombe" we are induced to regard, upon the whole, as *the best* American novel. There have been few books of its peculiar kind, we think, written in *any* country much its superior. Its interest is intense from beginning to end. Talent of a lofty order is evinced in every page of it. Its most distinguishing features are invention, vigour, almost audacity, of thought—great variety of what the German critics term *intrigue*, and exceeding ingenuity and finish in the adaptation of its component parts. Nothing is wanting to a complete whole, and nothing is out of place or out of time. Without being chargeable in the least degree with imitation, the novel bears a strong family resemblance to the Caleb Williams of Godwin. Thinking thus highly of "George Balcombe," we still do not wish to be understood as ranking it with the more brilliant fictions of some of the living novelists of Great Britain. In regard to the authorship of the book, some little conversation has occurred, and the

matter is still considered a secret. But why so?—or rather, *how so?* The mind of the chief personage of the story is the transcript of a mind familiar to us—an unintentional transcript, let us grant—but still one not to be mistaken. "George Balcombe" thinks, speaks, and acts, as no person, we are convinced, but Judge Beverley Tucker * ever precisely thought, spoke, or acted before.

CCVI.—Tucker's "George Balcombe."

"Had the "George Balcombe" of Professor Beverley Tucker been the work of any one born North of Mason and Dixon's line, it would have been long ago recognised as one of the very noblest fictions ever written by an American. It is almost as good as "Caleb Williams." The manner in which the cabal of the "North American Review" first write all our books and then review them, puts me in mind of the fable about the Lion and the Painter. It is high time that the literary South took its own interests into its own charge.

CCVII.—"Undine."

How radically has "Undine" been misunderstood! Beneath its obvious meaning there runs an under-current, simple, quite intelligible, artistically managed, and richly philosophical.

From internal evidence afforded by the book itself, I gather that the author suffered from the ills of a mal-arranged marriage—the bitter reflections thus engendered inducing the fable.

In the contrast between the artless, thoughtless, and careless character of Undine before possessing a soul, and her serious, enwrapt, and anxious yet happy condition after possessing it, a condition which, with all its multiform disquietudes, she still feels to be preferable to her original state, Fouqué has beautifully painted the difference between the heart unused to *love*, and the heart which has received its inspiration.

The jealousies which follow the marriage, arising from

* Son of Saint George Tucker, born at Matoax, Virginia, 1784—raised to the bench 1815-30, died 1851.

the conduct of Bertalda, are but the natural troubles of love, but the persecutions of Kuhleborn and the other water-spirits who take umbrage at Huldbrand's treatment of his wife, are meant to picture certain difficulties from the interference of relations in conjugal matters—difficulties which the author has himself experienced. The warning of Undine to Huldbrand, "Reproach me not upon the waters, or we part for ever," is intended to embody the truth that quarrels between man and wife are seldom or never irremediable unless when taking place in the presence of third parties. The second wedding of the knight with his gradual forgetfulness of Undine, and Undine's intense grief beneath the waters, are dwelt upon so pathetically, so passionately, that there can be no doubt of the author's personal opinions on the subject of second marriages—no doubt of his deep personal interest in the question. How thrillingly are these few and simple words made to convey his belief that the mere death of a beloved wife does not imply a separation so final or so complete as to justify a union with another!

> The fisherman had loved Undine with exceeding tenderness, and it was a doubtful conclusion to his mind that the mere disappearance of his beloved child could be properly viewed as her death.

This is where the old man is endeavouring to dissuade the knight from wedding Bertalda.

I cannot say whether the novelty of the conception of "Undine," or the loftiness and purity of its ideality, or the intensity of its pathos, or the rigour of its simplicity, or the high artistical ability with which all are combined into a well-kept, well-*motivirt* whole of absolute unity of effect, is the particular chiefly to be admired.

How delicate and graceful are the transitions from subject to subject!—a point severely testing the autorial power—as, when, for the purposes of the story, it becomes necessary that the knight, with Undine and Bertalda, shall proceed down the Danube. An ordinary novelist would have here tormented both himself and his readers in his search for a sufficient motive for the voyage. But in

a fable such as "Undine," how all-sufficient, how well in keeping, appears the simple motive assigned!

In this grateful union of friendship and affection, winter came and passed away; and spring, with its foliage of tender green and its heaven of softest blue, succeeded to gladden the hearts of the three inmates of the castle. *What wonder, then, that its storks and swallows inspired them also with a disposition to travel?*

CCVIII.—U. S. Motto.

The United States' motto, *E pluribus unum*, may possibly have a sly allusion to Pythagoras's definition of beauty—the reduction of many into one.

CCIX.—Vengeance.

What can be more soothing, at once to a man's Pride and to his Conscience, than the conviction that, in taking vengeance on his enemies for *in*justice done him, he has simply to do them *justice* in return?

CCX.—Voltaire's Works.

Were I to consign these volumes, altogether, to the hands of any very young friend of mine, I could not, in conscience, describe them otherwise than as "*tam multi, tam grandes, tam pretiosi codices;*" and it would grieve me much to add the "*incendite omnes illas membranas.*" *

CCXI.—Voltaire.

Voltaire, in his preface to "Brutus," actually *boasts* of having introduced the Roman Senate on the stage in red mantles.

CCXII.—Vox Populi.

The *vox populi*, so much talked about to so little purpose, is, possibly, that very *vox et preterea nihil* which the countryman, in "Catullus," mistook for a nightingale.

* Mercier's "L'an deux mille quatre cents quarante."

CCXIII.—Webbe's "Man About Town."

Cornelius Webbe * is one of the best of that numerous school of extravaganzists who sprang from the ruins of Lamb. We must be in perfect good-humour, however, with ourselves and all the world, to be much pleased with such works as "The Man about Town," in which the harum-scarum, hyperexcursive mannerism is carried to an excess which is frequently fatiguing.

CCXIV.—Wilkinson's Letters.

These twelve Letters † are occupied, in part, with minute details of such atrocities on the part of the British, during their sojourn in Charleston, as the quizzing of Mrs. Wilkinson and the pilfering of her shoe-buckles — the remainder being made up of the indignant comments of Mrs. Wilkinson herself.

It is very true, as the Preface assures us, that "few records exist of American women either before or during the war of the Revolution, and that those perpetuated by History want the charm of personal narration,"—but then we are well delivered from such charms of personal narration as we find here. The only supposable merit in the compilation is that dogged air of truth with which the fair authoress relates the lamentable story of her misadventures. I look in vain for that "useful information" about which I have heard—unless, indeed, it is in the passage where we are told that the letter-writer "was a young and beautiful widow; that her handwriting is clear and feminine; and that the letters were copied by herself into a blank quarto book, on which the extravagant sale-price marks one of the features of the times:"—there are other extravagant sale-prices, however, besides that;—it was seventy-five cents that I paid for these "Letters." Besides, they are silly,

* Author also of "Lyric Leaves," "Glances at Life in City and Suburb," 1836, and the "Absent Man," 1838.

† "Letters of Eliza Wilkinson during the invasion and possession of Charleston, S.C., by the British, in the Revolutionary War." Arranged by Caroline Gilman.

and I cannot conceive why Mrs. Gilman thought the public wished to read them. It is really too bad for her to talk at a body, in this style, about "gathering relics of past history," and "floating down streams of time."

As for Mrs. Wilkinson, I am rejoiced that she lost her shoe-buckles.

CCXV.—The late John Wilson.

That Professor Wilson is one of the most gifted and altogether one of the most remarkable men of his day, few persons will be weak enough to deny. His ideality—his enthusiastic appreciation of the beautiful, conjoined with a temperament compelling him into action and expression, has been the root of his pre-eminent success. Much of it, undoubtedly, must be referred to that so-called moral courage which is but the consequence of the temperament in its physical elements. In a word, Professor Wilson is what he is, because he possesses ideality, energy, and audacity, each in a very unusual degree. The first, almost unaided by the two latter, has enabled him to produce much impression as a poet upon the secondary or tertiary grades of the poetic comprehension. His "Isle of Palms" appeals effectively to all those poetic intellects in which the poetic predominates greatly over the intellectual element. It is a composition which delights through the glow of its imagination, but which repels (comparatively, of course) through the *niaiseries* of its general conduct and construction. As a critic, Professor Wilson has derived, as might easily be supposed, the greatest aid from the qualities for which we have given him credit—and it is in criticism especially, that it becomes very difficult to say which of these qualities has assisted him the most. It is sheer audacity, however, to which, perhaps, after all, he is the most particularly indebted. How little he owes to intellectual pre-eminence, and how much to the mere overbearing impetuosity of his opinions, would be a singular subject for speculation. Nevertheless it is true, that this rash spirit of domination would have served, without his rich ideality, but to hurry him into contempt. Be this as it may, in the first requisite

of a critic the Scotch Aristarchus is grossly deficient. Of one who instructs we demand, in the first instance, a certain knowledge of the principles which regulate the instruction. Professor Wilson's capability is limited to a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and fastidious sense of the deformed. Why or how either is either, he never dreams of pretending to inquire, because he sees clearly his own inability to comprehend. He is no analyst. He is ignorant of the machinery of his own thoughts and the thoughts of other men. His criticism is emphatically on the surface—superficial. His opinions are mere *dicta*—unsupported *verba magistri*—and are just or unjust at the variable taste of the individual who reads them. He persuades—he bewilders—he overwhelms—at times he even argues—but there has been no period at which he ever *demonstrated* anything beyond his own utter incapacity for demonstration.

CCXVI.—Wirt's "British Spy."

The "British Spy" of Wirt * seems an imitation of the "Turkish Spy," upon which Montesquieu's "Persian Letters" are also based. Marana's work was in *Italian*—Doctor Johnson errs.

CCXVII.—A Wit's Greatest Work.

Jack Birkenhead, *apud* Bishop Sprat, says that "a great wit's great work is to refuse." The apophthegm must be swallowed *cum grano salis*. His greatest work is to originate no matter that shall require refusal.

* The "Letters of the British Spy" were first published in the "Virginia Argus," 1803, and have been several times reprinted. They were written by Dr. William Wirt, author of some well-known essays, etc.

ADDENDA.

Not only do I think it paradoxical to speak of a man of genius as personally ignoble, but I confidently maintain that the highest genius is but the loftiest moral nobility.

It is laughable to observe how easily any system of philosophy can be proved false; but then is it not mournful to perceive the impossibility of even fancying any particular system to be true?

Of the genius of Miss Landon (L.E.L.) it is almost unnecessary to speak. Without the elegance of Mrs. Hemans, she had considerable grace; with a fine ear, she was often careless in her rhythm; possessing a fancy exuberant and glowing, she showered her metaphors too indiscriminately around her. But few equalled her—if we may so speak—in the *passionate purity* of her verse. Affection breathed through every line she wrote. Perhaps there was a mannerism, certainly an affectation, in her constant reference to love, and blighted love especially; but even this error was made seductive by the never-ceasing variety which she contrived to throw around her theme, and the sweetness, richness, and enthusiasm of her song. Her great faults were a want of method, and a careless, rapid habit of composition. From first to last she was emphatically an "*improvisatrice*." She wrote from whim rather than from plan, and consequently was often trite, and always careless. These observations will apply, we think, equally to her prose. Her "Ethel Churchill" may be taken as a specimen, and the best specimen of her style in romance-writing. It would be almost invidious to name any one of her long poems as the finest. In her shorter pieces she is often more successful than in more extended

flights; and some of her most carelessly written stanzas glitter most with the dew of Castaly. Without fear of contradiction we may say that she has left no living female poet to compete with her in fame,* unless Mrs. Norton may be said to be her rival; and even with Mrs. Norton, so different are the two writers, no parallel can be drawn. Let us be contented with placing Hemans, Landon, and Norton together in one glorious trio—the sweetest, brightest, loftiest of the female poets of the present generation.

The style of Bolingbroke is unrivalled. No library is perfect without his works, and they should be studied by the public speaker, or the author, night and day. We boldly aver that there does not exist a writer in the language the reading of whose works, so far as diction is concerned, would be more beneficial to young men. Bolingbroke's choice of words is singularly fine. Nothing can be clearer, stronger, or more copious than his language. Terse, nervous, epigrammatic; diffused in general, but condensed when necessary; at times racy, at times vehement, at times compact as iron; rhetorical, yet easy; elegant, yet convincing; bold, rapid, and declamatory, his writings carry one away, like a spoken harangue, without betraying the carelessness of an extemporaneous style. The very absence of method, which, in others, would be faulty, is in Bolingbroke, from the air of frankness it gives to his cause, and its consistency with his essentially oratorial style, a merit—at least not a defect. In grace he has no equal. The euphony of his sentences is like the liquid flow of a river. No writer in the English tongue so much resembles Cicero—to our mind—as Bolingbroke. Burke has been called his rival here; but Burke wanted the ease, the elegance, the chastened imagery of Tully, and in all of these St. John rivalled the friend of Atticus. Deeply imbued with the Latin literature, Bolingbroke has caught, as it were, the spirit of the Augustan age; and we feel in perusing his pages the same chastened delight which we enjoy over no modern, and only over Tully among the ancients.

* This was written in 1841.—*Ed.*

The reputation of the elder D'Israeli as scholar and philosopher is at least as well founded as that of any man of his age. He has given to the world a series of *peculiar* books—books in which the richest variety of *recherché* detail and anecdote about literary affairs is made subservient to the most comprehensive survey and analysis of letters themselves, considered in respect to their important spiritual uses. He is the only *savant* upon record who has busied himself, without pedantry, among the *minutiæ* of classical lore. His works will last as long as the language in which they are written. The "Curiosities of Literature," the "Literary Character," the "Miscellanies of Literature," the "Calamities of Authors," and all but the "Amenities of Literature" are, however, but incidental labours arising from a more extensive design—a "History of English Literature"—of which he thus speaks: "It was my intention not to furnish an arid narrative of books and of authors, but, following the steps of the human mind through the wide track of time, to trace from their beginnings the progress and the decline of public opinions, and to illustrate, as the objects presented themselves, the great incidents in our national annals." In this magnificent project the philosopher was arrested by blindness. The "Amenities of Literature" is a portion, and, in fact, the beginning of the great scheme which can now never be completed.

In all commentating upon Shakspeare there has been a radical error never yet mentioned. It is the error of attempting to expound his characters—to account for their actions—to reconcile his inconsistencies—not as if they were the coinage of a humain brain, but if they had been actual existencies upon earth. We talk of Hamlet the man, instead of Hamlet the *dramatis persona*—of Hamlet that God, in place of Hamlet that Shakspeare, created. If Hamlet had really lived, and if the tragedy were an accurate record of his deeds, from this record (with some trouble) we might, it is true, reconcile his inconsistencies, and settle to our satisfaction his true character. But the task becomes

the purest absurdity when we deal only with a phantom. It is not (then) the inconsistencies of the acting man which we have as a subject of discussion—(although we proceed as if it were, and thus *inevitably* err,) but the whims and vacillations—the conflicting energies and indolences of the poet. It seems to us little less than a miracle that this obvious point should have been overlooked.

While on this topic, we may as well offer an ill-considered opinion of our own as to the *intention of the poet* in the delineation of the Dane. It must have been well known to Shakspeare that a leading feature in certain more intense classes of intoxication (from whatever cause) is an almost irresistible impulse to counterfeit a further degree of excitement than actually exists. Analogy would lead any thoughtful person to suspect the same impulse in madness—when beyond doubt, it is manifest. This Shakspeare *felt*—not thought. He felt it through his marvellous power of *identification* with humanity at large—the ultimate source of his magical influence upon mankind. He wrote of Hamlet as if Hamlet he were; and having, in the first instance, imagined his hero excited to partial insanity by the disclosures of the ghost—he (the poet) *felt* that it was natural he should be impelled to exaggerate the insanity.

The Bishop of Durham (Dr. Butler) once asked Dean Tucker whether he did not think that communities went mad *en masse*, now and then, just as individuals, individually. The thing need not have been questioned. Were not the Abderians seized all at once with the Euripides lunacy, during which they ran about the streets declaiming the plays of the poet? And now here is the great tweedle-dee-tweedle-dum paroxysm—the uproar about Pusey. If England and America are not lunatic now—at this very moment—then I have never seen such a thing as a March hare.

I make no exception, even in Dante's favour:—the only thing well said of purgatory is, that a man may go farther and fare worse.

The works of Christopher Pease Cranch are slightly tinged with the spirit of mixed Puritanism, utilitarianism, and transcendentalism, which seems to form the poetical atmosphere of Massachusetts—but, dismissing this one sin, are amongst the *truest* of American poetry. I know nothing finer of its kind (and that kind is a most comprehensive one) than one of his shorter pieces, entitled "My thoughts:"

Many are the thoughts that come to me
 In my lonely musing;
And they drift so strange and swift
 There's no time for choosing
Which to follow; for to leave
 Any seems a losing.

When they come, they come in flocks,
 As on glancing feather,
Startled birds rise, one by one,
 In autumnal weather,
Waking one another up
 From the sheltering heather.

Some so merry that I laugh;
 Some are grave and serious;
Some so trite, their last approach
 Is enough to weary us:
Others flit like midnight ghosts,
 Shrouded and mysterious.

There are thoughts that o'er me steal,
 Like the day when dawning;
Great thoughts winged with melody,
 Common utterance scorning;
Moving in an inward tune
 And an inward morning.

Some have dark and drooping wings,
 Children all of sorrow;
Some are gay, as if to-day
 Could see no cloudy morrow—
And yet, like light and shade, they each
 Must from the other borrow.

One by one they come to me
 On their destined mission;

One by one I see them fade
With no hopeless vision—
For they've led me on a step
To their home Elysian.

There is here a great deal of natural fancy—I mean to say that the images are such as would naturally arise in the mind of an imaginative and educated man seeking to describe his "*thoughts.*" But the main charm of the poem is the *nice*, and at the same time *bold* art of its rhythm. Here is no merely negative merit, but much of originality—or, if not precisely that, at least much of freshness and spirit. The opening line, barring an error to be presently mentioned, is very skilful, and to me the result is not less novel than happy. The general idea is merely a succession of trochees (for the long syllable, or cæsura proper, at the end of each odd line, is a trochee's equivalent), but, in lieu of a trochee at the commencement of the opening verse, we have a trochee and a pyrrhic (forming the compound foot called in Latin *Pæon primus*, and in Greek ἀστρολογος). Here is a very bold excess of two short syllables, and the result would be highly pleasurable if the reader were prepared for it—if he were prepared by monotone, to expect variation. As it is, he is at fault in a first attempt at perusal, and it is only on a second or third trial that he appreciates the effect. To be sure, he then wonders why he did not at first catch the intention—but the mischief has been committed. The fact is, that the line, which would have been singularly beautiful in the body of the poem, is in its present position, a blemish. Mr. Cranch has violated a vital law of rhythmical art in not permitting his rhythm to determine itself instantaneously by his opening foot. A trochee rhythm, for example, should invariably commence with a trochee. I speak thus at length on this apparently trivial point, because I have been much interested in the phenomenon of a marked commonplaceness of defect, involving as marked an originality of merit.

It is scarcely too much to say that the Temperance Reformation is the most important which the world ever

knew. Yet its *great* feature has never yet been made a subject of comment. We mean that of adding to man's happiness (the ultimate object of *all* reform), not by the difficult and equivocal process of multiplying his pleasures in their external regard, but by the simple and most effectual one of exalting his capacity for enjoyment. The temperate man carries within his own bosom, under all circumstances, the true, the only element of bliss.

Through the influence of the physical rather than of the moral suggestions against alcohol, the permanency of the Temperance Reform will be made good. Convince the world that spirituous liquors are poison to the body, and it will be scarcely necessary to add that they are ruin to the soul.

"The Moneyed Man" by Horace Smith is a good book, and well worth the republication. The story is skilfully constructed, and conveys an excellent moral. Horace Smith is one of the authors of "The Rejected Addresses." He is perhaps the most erudite of all the English novelists, and unquestionably one of the best in every respect. His style is peculiarly good.

Alfred Tennyson—a poet, who (in our own humble but sincere opinion) is *the greatest* that ever lived. We are perfectly willing to undergo all the censure which so heretical an opinion may draw down upon us.

This volume * contains some two or three papers which are worth preserving—which have in them the elements of life—and which will leave a definite and perhaps a permanent impression upon every one who reads them. In general, however, it is made up of that species of easy writing which is not the easiest reading. We find here too much slipshodiness, both in thought and manner, and too little of determined purpose. The tone is not that of a bold genius uttering vigorous things carelessly and incon-

* "The Indicator and the Companion," by Leigh Hunt.

siderately, with contempt or neglect of method or completeness, but rather that of a naturally immethodical and inaccurate intellect, making a certain air of ruggedness and *insouciance* the means of exalting the commonplace into the semblance of originality and strength. Hunt has written many agreeable papers, but no great ones. His points will bear no steady examination. The view at first taken of him by the public is far nearer the truth perhaps than that which seems to have been latterly adopted. His "Feast of the Poets" is possibly his best composition. As a rambling essayist, he has too little of the raw material. As a critic, he is merely saucy, or lackadaisical, or falsely enthusiastic, or, at best, pointedly conceited. His judgment is not worth a rush—witness his absurd eulogies on Coleridge's "Pains of Sleep," quoted in the volume before us. In his remarks upon Con. De Basso's "Ode to a Dead Body," he has said critically some of the very best things it ever occurred to him to say; but if there be need to shew the pure imbecility and irrelevancy of the paper *as a criticism*, let it only be contrasted with what a truly critical spirit would write. The highest literary quality of Hunt is a secondary or tertiary grade of Fancy. His loftiest literary attainment is to *entertain*. This is precisely the word which suits his case. As for excitement we must not look for it in him. And, unhappily, his books are not of such character that they may be taken up with pleasure, (as may the "Spectator,") by a mind exhausted through excitement. In this condition we require *repose*—which is the antipodes of the style of Hunt. And since, for the *ennuyé*, he has insufficient stimulus, it is clear that, as an author, he is fit for very little, if really for anything at all.

The author* speaks of music like a man, and not like a fiddler. This is something—and that he has imagination is more. But the philosophy of music is beyond his depth, and of its physics, he unquestionably has no conception. By the way, of all the so-called scientific musicians, how many may we suppose cognisant of the acoustic facts and

* H. F. Chorley, author of "Conti," etc.—*Ed.*

mathematical deductions? To be sure, my acquaintance with eminent composers is quite limited, but I have never met *one* who did not stare and say "yes," "no," "hum," "ha," "eh," when I mentioned the mechanism of the *sirène*, or made allusion to the wave vibrations at right angles.

The serious (minor) compositions of Dickens have been lost sight of in the blaze of his comic reputation.* One of the most forcible things ever written is a short story of his, called the "Black Veil," a strangely pathetic and richly imaginative production, replete with the loftiest tragic power.

P.S.—Mr. Dickens's head must puzzle the phrenologists. The organs of ideality are small; and the conclusion of the "Curiosity Shop" is more truly ideal (in both phrenological senses) than any composition of equal length in the English language.

It ranks† with Armstrong on "Health," the "Botanic Garden," and the "Connubia Florum." Such works should conciliate the Utilitarians. I think I will set about a lyric on the Quadrature of Curves, or the Arithmetic of Infinities. Cotes, however, supplies me a ready-made title in his "Harmonia Mensurarum," and there is no reason why I should not be *fluent*, at least upon the fluents of fractional expressions.

In general we should not be over-scrupulous about niceties of phrases when the matter in hand is a dunce to be gibbeted. Speak out! or the person may not understand you. He is to be hung. Then hang him by all means, but make no bow when you mean no obeisance, and eschew the droll delicacy of the clown in the play—"Be so good, sir, as to rise and be put to death."

This is the only true principle among men. Where the gentler sex is concerned, there seems but one course for

* Written in 1844.—*Ed.*

† "Poem de Ponderibus et Mensuris," by Quintius R. F. Palæmon.

the critic—speak if you can commend—be silent, if not; for a woman will never be brought to admit a non-identity between herself and her book, and "a well-bred man"—says justly that excellent old English moralist James Puckle, in his "Gray Cap for a Green Head,"—"a well-bred man will never *give himself the liberty* to speak ill of women."

When music affects to tears, seeming causeless, we weep *not*, as Gravina supposes, from "excess of pleasure," but through excess of an impatient, petulant sorrow, that as mere mortals we are as yet in no condition to banquet upon those supernal ecstasies of which the music affords us merely a suggestive and indefinite glimpse.

One of the most deliberate tricks of Voltaire is where he renders, by

"Soyez justes, mortels, et ne craignez qu' un Dieu"

the words of Phlegyas, who cries out in hell

"Discite justitiam, moniti, et non temnere *Divos*."

He gives the line this twist by way of showing that the ancients worshipped *one* God. He is endeavouring to deny that the idea of the unity of God originated with the Jews.

The theorisers on Government, who pretend always to "begin with the beginning," commence with man in what they call his *natural* state—the savage. What right have they to suppose this his natural state? Man's chief idiosyncrasy being reason, it follows that his savage condition—his condition of action *without* reason—is his *un*natural state. The more he reasons the nearer he approaches the position to which this chief idiosyncrasy irresistibly impels him; and not until he attains this position with exactitude—not until his reason has exhausted itself for his improvement—not until he has stepped upon the highest pinnacle of civilisation—will his *natural* state be ultimately reached, or thoroughly determined.

Our literature is infested with a swarm of just such

little people as this—creatures who succeed in creating for themselves an absolutely positive reputation by the mere dint of the continuity and perpetuality of their appeals to the public—which is permitted, not for a single instant, to rid itself of these epizoa, or to get their pretensions out of sight.

We cannot, then, regard the microscopical works of the *animalcula* in question as simply nothings, for they produce, as I say, a positive effect, and no multiplication of zeros will result in unity; but as negative quantities—as less than nothings, since – into – will give +.

These gentlemen, in attempting the dash of Carlyle, get only as far as the luminousness of Plutarch, who begins the life of Demetrius Poliorcetes with an account of his death, and informs us that the hero could not have been as tall as his father, for the simple reason that his father, after all, was only his uncle.

It* is the half-profound, half-silly, and wholly irrational composition of a very clever, very ignorant, and laughably impudent fellow, "*ingeniosus puer, sed insignis nebulo*," as the Jesuits have well described Crebillon.

It is difficult to conceive what must have been the morbidity of the German intellect or taste when it not only tolerated but truly admired and enthusiastically applauded such an affair as "The Sorrows of Werter." The German approbation was clearly in good faith: as for our own, or that of the English, it was the quintessence of affectation. Yet we did our best, as in duty bound, to work ourselves up into the fitting mood. The title, by the way, is mistranslated—*Leiden* does not mean *Sorrows* but *Sufferings*.

"*The Alphadelphia Tocsin!*"† ("Phœbus, what a name to fill the speaking trump of future fame!") and "devoted to the interests of the labouring classes!" by which, I

* "The Age of Reason," by Thomas Paine.—*Ed.*

† Title of a journal published at Alphadelphia, Michigan.

presume, are intended the classes who have to pronounce every morning the great appellation of the paper itself. Such a work should not want editors, and accordingly we are informed that it has *eight*. What on earth is the meaning of Alphadelphia? Is the "Alphadelphia Tocsin" the tocsin of the city of the double A's? if so, the idea is too easily slipped into that of the A double S.

"Gênes dans ce temps achetait tout le blé de l'Europe."

For an hour I have been endeavouring, without success, to make out the meaning of this passage, which I find in a French translation of Lady Morgan's "Letters on Italy." I could not conceive how or why all the corn of Europe should have been bought, or what corn, in any shape, had to do with the matter at issue. Procuring the original work, after some trouble, I read that "the Genoese, at this period bought the *scorn* of all Europe by," etc. etc. Now, here, the translator is by no means so much in fault as Lady Morgan, who is too prone to commit sin with the *verbum insolens*. I can see no force here in the unusuality of "bought," as applied to scorn (although there are cases in which the expression would be very appropriate), and cannot condemn the Frenchman for supposing the *s* a superfluity and a misprint.

It is astonishing to see how a magazine article, like a traveller, spruces up after crossing the sea. We, ourselves, have had the honour of being pirated without mercy, but as we found our articles improved by the process (at least in the opinion of our countrymen), we said nothing, as a matter of course. We have written paper after paper which attracted no notice at all until it has appeared as original in "Bentley's Miscellany" or the "Paris Charivari." The "Boston Notion" once abused us very lustily for having written "The House of Usher." Not long afterwards Bentley published it anonymously as original with itself, whereupon "The Notion," having forgotten that we wrote it, not only lauded it *ad nauseam* but copied it *in toto*.

In looking at the world *as it is*, we shall find it folly to deny that, to worldly success, a surer path is villany than virtue. What the Scriptures mean by the "*leaven* of unrighteousness" is that leaven by which men *rise*.

Bolles's Phonographic Dictionary has "controvertible" and not "controvertibility," "self-conceited" and not "self-conceitedly," "worldly-minded" and not "worldly-mindedly." Are these omissions intentional? We presume not. Some of its definitions are inaccurate, if not odd—whether these are adopted from other works we have not leisure to ascertain. For example, "*jealousy*" is defined as "suspicion in love," but is it not rather the passion aroused by suspicion in love? "Museum" is defined "a collection of *learned* curiosities," but neither Tom Thumb nor the Anaconda are particularly "learned." A *printer* is said to be "one who prints books," then one who merely prints handbills is no printer at all. A regicide is described as a "murderer of *one's* king," and yet the murderer of anybody's king is still a regicide.

In a dictionary, if anywhere, we look for rigorous accuracy of definition. We are not finding fault with Mr. Bolles's work in especial. He is no worse than his predecessors.

Note.—The foregoing marginal notes include a large number now collected for the first time, together with nearly the whole of those included in the four volume American edition of Poe's works. The few which have been omitted here will be found elsewhere in this collection, in the longer works in which their author subsequently embodied them.—*Ed.*

FIFTY SUGGESTIONS.

I.

It is observable that, while among all nations the omni-colour, white, has been received as an emblem of the pure, the no-colour, black, has by no means been generally admitted as *sufficiently* typical of impurity. There are blue devils as well as black; and when we think *very* ill of a woman, and wish to *blacken* her character, we merely call her "a *blue*-stocking," and advise her to read, in Rabelais' "*Gargantua*," the chapter "*de ce qui est signifié par les couleurs blanc et bleu.*" There is far more difference between these "*couleurs*," in fact, than that which exists between simple *black* and white. Your "blue," when we come to talk of stockings, is black in *issimo*—"*nigrum nigrius nigro*"—like the matter from which Raymond Lully first manufactured his alcohol.

II.

Mr. ——, I perceive, has been appointed Librarian to the new—— Athenæum. To him the appointment is advantageous in many respects. Especially:—"*Mon cousin, voici une belle occasion pour apprende à lire!*"

III.

As far as I can understand the "loving our enemies," it implies the hating our friends.

IV.

In commencing our dinners with gravy soup, no doubt we have taken a hint from Horace. "Da," he says,

"—— Si *grave* non est,
Quæ prima iratum ventrem placaverit esca."

V.

Of much of our cottage architecture we may safely say, I think (admitting the good intention), that it *would* have been Gothic if it had not felt it its duty to be Dutch.

VI.

James's multitudinous novels seem to be written upon the plan of "the songs of the Bard of Schiraz," in which, we are assured by Fadladeen, "the same beautiful thought occurs again and again in every possible variety of phrase."

VII.

Some of our foreign lions resemble the human brain in one very striking particular. They are without any sense themselves, and yet are the centres of sensation.

VIII.

Mirabeau, I fancy, acquired his wonderful tact at foreseeing and meeting *contingencies*, during his residence in the stronghold of *If*.

IX.

Cottle's "Reminiscences of Coleridge" is just such a book as damns its perpetrator for ever in the opinion of every gentleman who reads it. More and more every day do we moderns *pavoneggiarsi* about our Christianity; yet, so far as the *spirit* of Christianity is concerned, we are immeasurably behind the ancients. Mottoes and proverbs are the indices of national character; and the Anglo-Saxons are disgraced in having no proverbial equivalent to the "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*" Moreover—where, in all statutary Christendom, shall we find a *law* so Christian as the "*Defuncti injuria ne afficiantur*" of the Twelve Tables? The simple *negative* injunction of the Latin law and proverb—the injunction *not to do ill* to the dead—seems, at a first glance, scarcely susceptible of improvement in the delicate respect of its terms. I cannot help thinking, however, that the sentiment, if not the idea intended, is more forcibly conveyed in an apothegm by one of the old English moralists, James Puckle. By an ingenious figure of speech he contrives to imbue the negation

of the Roman command with a spirit of active and positive beneficence. "When speaking of the dead," he says, in his "Gray Cap for a Green Head," "*so fold up your discourse that their virtues may be outwardly shown, while their vices are wrapped up in silence.*"

X.

I have no doubt that the Fourierites honestly fancy "a nasty poet fit for nothing" to be the true translation of "*poeta nascitur non fit.*"

XI.

There surely can*not* be "more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of" (oh, Andrew Jackson Davis!) "in *your* philosophy."

XII.

"It is only as the Bird of Paradise quits us in taking wing," observes, or should observe, some poet, "that we obtain a full view of the beauty of its plumage;" and it is only as the politician is about being "turned out" that, like the snake of the Irish Chronicle when touched by St. Patrick, he "awakens to a sense of his *situation.*"

XIII.

Newspaper editors seem to have constitutions closely similar to those of the Deities in "Walhalla," who cut each other to pieces every day, and yet get up perfectly sound and fresh every morning.

XIV.

As far as I can comprehend the modern cant in favour of "unadulterated Saxon," it is fast leading us to the language of that region where, as Addison has it, "they sell the best fish and speak the plainest English."

XV.

The frightfully long money-pouches, like "the Cucumber called the Gigantic," which have come in vogue among our belles, are *not* of Parisian origin, as many suppose, but are strictly indigenous here. The fact is, such a fashion would

be quite out of place in Paris, where it is money *only* that women keep in a purse. The purse of an American lady, however, must be large enough to carry both the money and the soul of its owner.

XVI.

I can see no objection to gentlemen "standing for Congress" provided they stand on one side, nor to their "running for Congress" if they are in a very great hurry to get there, but it would be a blessing if some of them could be persuaded into sitting still for Congress after they arrive.

XVII.

If *Envy*, as Cyprian has it, be "the moth of the soul," whether shall we regard *Content* as its Scotch snuff or its camphor?

XVIII.

M——, having been "used up" in the "——Review," goes about town lauding his critic, as an epicure lauds the best London mustard, with the tears in his eyes.

XIX.

"*Con tal que las costumbres de un autor sean puras y castas*," says the Catholic Don Tomas de las Torres, in the preface to his "Amatory Poems," *importo muy poco qui no sean igualmente severas sus obras*," meaning, in plain English, that provided the personal morals of an author are pure, it matters little what those of his books are.

For so unprincipled an idea Don Tomas, no doubt, is still having a hard time of it in purgatory; and by way of most pointedly manifesting their disgust at his philosophy on the topic in question, many modern theologians and divines are now busily squaring their conduct by his propositions exactly *conversed*.

XX.

Children are never too tender to be whipped; like tough beef-steaks, the more you beat them the more tender they become.

XXI.

Lucian, in describing the statue "with its surface of Parian marble, and its interior filled with rags," must have been looking with a prophetic eye at some of our great "moneyed institutions."

XXII.

That poets (using the word comprehensively, as including artists in general) are a *genus irritabile* is well understood, but the *why* seems not to be commonly seen. An artist *is* an artist only by dint of his exquisite sense of Beauty, a sense affording him rapturous enjoyment, but at the same time implying or involving an equally exquisite sense of Deformity of disproportion. Thus a wrong—an injustice—done a poet who is really a poet, excites him to a degree which to ordinary apprehension appears disproportionate with the wrong. Poets *see* injustice, *never* where it does not exist, but very often where the unpoetical see no injustice whatever. Thus the poetical irritability has no reference to "temper" in the vulgar sense, but merely to a more than usual clear-sightedness in respect to wrong, this clear-sightedness being nothing more than a corollary from the vivid perception of right—of justice—of proportion—in a word, of το καλον. But one thing is clear, that the man who is *not* "irritable" (to the ordinary apprehension) is *no poet*.

XXIII.

Let a man succeed ever so evidently—ever so demonstrably—in many different displays of *genius*, the envy of criticism will agree with the popular voice in denying him more than *talent* in any. Thus a poet who has achieved a great (by which I mean an effective) poem, should be cautious not to distinguish himself in any other walk of Letters. In especial—let him make no effort in Science—unless anonymously, or with the view of waiting patiently the judgment of posterity. Because universal or even versatile geniuses have rarely or never been known, *therefore*, thinks the world, none such can ever be. A "therefore" of this kind is, with the

world conclusive. But what is the *fact*, as taught us by analysis of mental power? Simply that the *highest* genius —that the genius which all men instantaneously acknowledge as such—which acts upon individuals, as well as upon the mass, by a species of magnetism incomprehensible but irresistible and *never resisted*—that this genius which demonstrates itself in the simplest gesture—or even by the absence of all—this genius which speaks without a voice and flashes from the unopened eye—is but the result of generally large mental power existing in a state of *absolute proportion*—so that no one faculty has undue predominance. *That* factitious "genius"—that "genius" in the popular sense—which is but the manifestation of the abnormal predominance of some one faculty over all the others—and, of course, at the expense and to the detriment of all the others —is a result of mental disease, or rather of organic malformation of mind:—it is this and nothing more. Not only will such "genius" fail, if turned aside from the path indicated by its predominant faculty; but, even when pursuing this path—when producing those works in which, certainly it is *best* calculated to succeed—will give unmistakable indications of *unsoundness*, in respect to general intellect. Hence, indeed, arises the just idea that

"Great wit to madness nearly is allied."

I say "*just* idea;" for by "great wit," in this case, the poet intends precisely the pseudo-genius to which I refer. The true genius, on the other hand, is necessarily, if not universal in its manifestations, at least capable of universality; and if, attempting all things, it succeeds in one rather better than in another, this is merely on account of a certain bias by which *Taste* leads it with more earnestness in the one direction than in the other. With equal zeal, it would succeed equally in all.

To sum up our results in respect to this very simple, but much *vexata quæstio*:—

What the world calls "genius" is the state of mental disease arising from the undue predominance of some one of the faculties. The works of such genius are never sound in

themselves, and, in especial, always betray the general mental insanity.

The *proportion* of the mental faculties, in a case where the general mental power is *not* inordinate, gives that result which we distinguish as *talent:*—and the talent is greater or less, first, as the general mental power is greater or less; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

The proportion of the faculties, in a case where the mental power is inordinately great, gives that result which *is* the true *genius* (but which, on account of the proportion and seeming simplicity of its works, is seldom acknowledged to *be* so); and the genius is greater or less, first as the general mental power is mere or less inordinately great; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

An objection will be made—that the greatest excess of mental power, however proportionate, does not seem to satisfy our idea of genius, unless we have in addition, sensibility, passion, energy. The reply is, that the "absolute proportion" spoken of when applied to inordinate mental power gives, as a result, the appreciation of Beauty and horror of Deformity which we call sensibility, together with that intense vitality, which is implied when we speak of "Energy" or "Passion."

XXIV.

"And Beauty draws us by a single hair."—Capillary attraction, of course.

XXV.

It is by no means clear as regards the present revolutionary spirit of Europe that it is a spirit which "moveth altogether if it move at all." In Great Britain it may be kept quiet for half a century yet, by placing at the head of affairs an experienced medical man. He should keep his forefinger constantly on the pulse of the patient, and prescribe *panem* in gentle doses, with as much *circenses* as the stomach can be made to retain.

XXVI.

The taste manifested by our Transcendental poets *is* to be treated "reverentially," beyond doubt, as one of Mr. Emerson's friends suggests—for the fact is it is Taste on her death-bed—Taste kicking *in articulo mortis.*

XXVII.

I should not say, of Taglioni, exactly that she dances, but that she laughs with her arms and legs, and that if she takes vengeance on her present oppressors she will be amply justified by the *lex Talionis.*

XXVIII.

The world is infested just now by a new sect of philosophers, who have not yet suspected themselves of forming a sect, and who, consequently, have adopted no name. They are the *Believers in everything Old.* Their High Priest in the East is Charles Fourier, in the West Horace Greeley, and high priests they are to some purpose. The only common bond among the sect is Credulity—let us call it Insanity at once, and be done with it. Ask any one of them *why* he believes this or that, and, if he be conscientious (ignorant people usually are), he will make you very much such a reply as Talleyrand made when asked why he believed in the Bible. "I believe in it first," said he, "because I am Bishop of Autun, and secondly *because I know nothing about it at all.*" What these philosophers call "argument" is a way they have "*de nier ce qui est, et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas.*"*

XXIX.

K——, the publisher, trying to be critical, talks about books pretty much as a washerwoman would about Niagara Falls, or a poulterer about a phœnix.

XXX.

The ingenuity of critical malice would often be laughable but for the disgust which, even in the most perverted

* Rosseau's "Nouvelle Héloise."

spirits, injustice never fails to excite. A common *trick* is that of decrying impliedly the higher by insisting upon the lower merits of an author. Macaulay, for example, deeply feeling how much critical acumen is enforced by cautious attention to the mere "rhetoric" which is its vehicle, has at length become the best of modern rhetoricians. His *brother* reviewers, anonymous of course, and likely to remain so for ever, extol "the acumen of Carlyle, the analysis of Schlegel, *and* the style of Macaulay." Bancroft is a philosophical historian, but no amount of philosophy has yet taught him to despise a minute accuracy in point of fact. His *brother* historians talk of "the grace of Prescott, the erudition of Gibbon, *and* the painstaking precision of Bancroft." Tennyson, perceiving how vividly an imaginative effect is aided, now and then, by a certain quaintness judiciously introduced, brings this latter at times in support of his most glorious and most delicate imagination, whereupon his *brother* poets hasten to laud the imagination of Mr. Somebody, whom nobody imagined to have any, "*and* the somewhat affected quaintness of Tennyson." Let the noblest poet add to his other excellencies, if he dares, that of faultless versification and scrupulous attention to grammar. He is damned at once. His rivals have it in their power to discourse of "A, the true poet, *and* B, the versifier and disciple of Lindley Murray."

XXXI.

The goddess Laverna, who is a head without a body, could not do better, perhaps, than make advances to "La Jeune France," which for some years to come, at least, must otherwise remain a body without a head.

XXXII.

H—— calls his verse a "poem" very much as Francis the First bestowed the title *mes déserts* upon his snug little deer-park at Fontainebleau.

XXXIII.

Mr. A——is frequently spoken of as "one of our most industrious writers;" and in fact when we consider how much he has written, we perceive at once that he *must* have been industrious, or he could never (like an honest woman as he is) have so thoroughly succeeded in keeping himself from being "talked about."

XXXIV.

That a cause leads to an effect is scarcely more certain than that, so far as Morals are concerned, a repetition of effect tends to the generation of cause. Herein lies the principle of what we so vaguely term "Habit."

XXXV.

With the exception of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," I have never read a poem combining so much of the fiercest passion with so much of the most delicate imagination as the "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" of Miss Barrett. I am forced to admit, however, that the latter work *is* a palpable imitation of the former, which it surpasses in thesis, as much as it falls below it in a certain calm energy, lustrous and indomitable—such as we might imagine in a broad river of molten gold.

XXXVI.

What has become of the inferior planet which Decuppis about nine years ago declared he saw traversing the disc of the sun?

XXXVII.

Ignorance *is* bliss"—but, that the bliss be real, the ignorance must be so profound as not to suspect itself ignorant. With this understanding, Boileau's line may be read thus:

Le plus fou *toujours* est le plus satisfait,"

—"*toujours*" in place of "*souvent.*"

XXXVIII.

Bryant and Street are both essentially descriptive poets; and descriptive poetry even in its happiest manifestation is

not of the highest order. But the distinction between Bryant and Street is very broad. While the former, in reproducing the sensible images of Nature, reproduces the sentiments with which he regards them, the latter gives us the images and nothing beyond. He never forces us to feel what we feel he must have felt.

XXXIX.

In lauding Beauty, Genius merely evinces a filial affection To Genius Beauty gives life—reaping often a reward in Immortality.

XL.

And this is the "American Drama" of——! Well!—that "Conscience which makes cowards of us all" will permit me to say in praise of the performance, only that it is not quite so bad as I expected it to be. But then I always expect too much.

XLI.

What we feel to be *Fancy* will be found fanciful still, whatever be the theme which engages it. No *subject* exalts it into Imagination. When Moore is termed "a fanciful poet," the epithet is applied with precision. He *is*. He is fanciful in "Lalla Rookh," and had he written the "Inferno" in the "Inferno" he would have contrived to be still fanciful and nothing beyond.

XLII.

When we speak of "a suspicious man," we may mean either one who suspects, or one to be suspected. Our language needs either the adjective "suspectful," or the adjective "suspectable."

XLIII.

"To love," says Spenser, "is

> To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
> To speed, to give, to want, to be undone.

The philosophy here might be rendered more profound, by the mere omission of a comma. We all know the *willing*

blindness—the *voluntary* madness of Love. We express this in thus punctuating the last line:

To speed, to give—*to want to be undone.*

It is a case, in short, where we gain a point by omitting it.

XLIV.

Miss Edgeworth seems to have had only an approximate comprehension of "Fashion," for she says, "If it was the fashion to burn me, and I at the stake, I hardly know ten persons of my acquaintance who would refuse to throw on a fagot." There are *many* who, in such a case, would "refuse to throw on a fagot"—for fear of smothering out the fire.

XLV.

I am beginning to think with Horsley—that "the People have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them."

XLVI.

"It is not fair to review my book without reading it," says Mr. Mathews, talking at the critics, and as usual, expecting impossibilities. The man who is clever enough to *write* such a work, is clever enough to read it, no doubt; but we should not look for so much talent in the world at large. Mr. Mathews will not imagine that I mean to blame *him.* The book alone is in fault, after all. The fact is that, "*es lasst sich nicht lesen*"—it will not *permit* itself to be read. Being a hobby of Mr. Mathews's and brimful of spirit, it will let nobody mount it but Mr Mathews.

XLVII.

It is only to teach his children Geography, that G—— wears a boot, like the picture of Italy upon the map.

XLVIII.

In his great Dictionary, Webster seems to have had an idea of being more English than the English—"*plus Arabe qu'en Arabie.*"*

* Count Anthony Hamilton.

XLIX.

That there were once "seven wise men" is by no means, strictly speaking, an historial *fact;* and I am rather inclined to rank the idea among the Kabbala.

L.

Painting their faces to look like Macaulay, some of our critics manage to resemble him, at length, as a Masaccian does a Rafaëllian Virgin; and, except that the former is feebler and thinner than the other—suggesting the idea of its being the ghost of the other—not one connoisseur in ten can perceive any difference. But then, unhappily, even the street lazzaroni can feel the distinction.

PINAKIDIA.

UNDER the head of "Random Thoughts," "Odds and Ends," "Stray Leaves," "Scraps," "Brevities," and a variety of similar titles, we occasionally meet, in periodicals and elsewhere, with papers of rich interest and value, the result in some cases of much thought and more research, expended, however, at a manifest disadvantage, if we regard merely the estimate which the public are willing to set upon such articles. It sometimes occurs that in papers of this nature may be found a collective mass of general but more usually of classical erudition, which, if dexterously besprinkled over a proper surface of narrative, would be sufficient to make the fortunes of one or two hundred ordinary novelists in these our good days, when all heroes and heroines are necessarily men and women of "extensive acquirements." But for the most part these "Brevities," etc., are either piecemeal cullings at second-hand from a variety of sources hidden or supposed to be hidden, or more audacious pilferings from those vast storehouses of brief facts, memoranda, and opinions in general literature, which are so abundant in all the principal libraries of Germany and France. Of the former species the *Koran* of Laurence Sterne is, at the same time, one of the most consummately impudent and silly, and it may well be doubted whether a single paragraph of any merit in the whole of it may not be found, *nearly verbatim*, in the works of some one of his immediate contemporaries. If the *Lacon* of Mr. Colton is any better, its superiority consists altogether in a deeper ingenuity in disguising his stolen wares, and in that prescriptive right of the strongest, which, time out of mind, has decided upon calling every

Napoleon a conqueror, and every Dick Turpin a thief. Seneca, Machiavelli,* Balzac, the author of "La Maniere de Bien Penser," Bielfeld the German, who wrote in French "Les Premiers Traits de l'Erudition Universelle," Rochefoucault, Bacon, Bolingbroke, and especially Burdon, of "materials for thinking" memory, possess among them indisputable claims to the ownership of nearly everything worth owning in the book.

Of the latter species of theft we see frequent specimens in the continental magazines of Europe, and occasionally meet with them even in the lower class of periodicals in Great Britain. These specimens are usually extracts, by wholesale, from such works as the "Bibliothéque des Memorabilia Literaria," the "Recueil des Bon Pensees," the "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses," the "Literary Memoirs" of Sallengré, the "Melanges Literaires" of Suard and André, or the "Pieces Interessantes et Peu Connues" of Laplace. D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature," "Literary Character," and "Calamities of Authors," have of late years proved exceedingly convenient to some little American pilferers in this line, but are now becoming too generally known to allow much hope of their good things being any longer appropriated with impunity.

Such collections as those of which we have been speaking are usually entertaining in themselves, and for the most part we relish everything about them save their pretentions to originality. In offering ourselves something of the kind to our readers, we wish to be understood as disclaiming in a great degree every such pretension. Most of the following article is original, and will be readily recognised as such by the classical and general reader; some portions of it may have been written down in the words, or nearly in the words, of the primitive authorities. The whole is taken from a confused mass of marginal notes and entries

* It is remarkable that much of what Colton has stolen from Machiavelli was previously stolen by Machiavelli from Plutarch. A MS. book of the *Apophthegms of the Ancients*, by this latter writer, having fallen into Machiavelli's hands, he put them nearly all into the mouth of his hero, Castrucio Castracani.

in a commonplace book. No certain arrangement has been considered necessary, and indeed so heterogeneous a farrago it would have been an endless task to methodise. We have chosen the heading *Pinakidia* or Tablets, as one sufficiently comprehensive. It was used for a somewhat similar purpose by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

The whole of Bulwer's elaborate argument on the immortality of the soul, which he has put into the mouth of "The Ambitious Student," may be confuted through the author's omission of one particular point in his summary of the attributes of Deity—a point which we cannot believe omitted altogether through accident. A single link is deficient in the chain, but the chain is worthless without it. No man doubts the immortality of the soul, yet of all truths, this truth of immortality is the most difficult to prove by any mere series of syllogisms. We would refer our readers to the argument here mentioned.

"The rude, rough, wild waste has its power to please,"

a line in one, Mr. Odiorne's poem, "The Progress of Refinement," is pronounced by the American author of a book entitled "Antediluvian Antiquities" "the very best alliteration in all poetry."

Lipsius, in his treatise, "De Supplicio Crucis," says that the upright beam of the cross was a *fixture* at the place of execution, whither the criminal was made to bear only the transverse arm. Consequently the painters are in error who depict our Saviour bearing the entire cross.

The tale in Plato's "Convivium," that man at first was male and female, and that, though Jupiter cleft them asunder, there was a natural love towards one another, seems to be only a corruption of the account in Genesis of Eve's being made from Adam's rib.

Corneille has these lines in one of his tragedies :

" Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez vous en eau,
La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau."

which may be thus translated,

" Weep, weep my eyes ! It is no time to laugh,
For half myself has buried the other half."

Over the iron gate of a prison at Ferrara is this inscription—" Ingresso alla prigione di Torquato Tasso."

The Rabbi Manasseh published a book at Amsterdam entitled " The Hopes of Israel." It was founded upon the supposed number and power of the Jews in America. This supposition was derived from a fabulous account by Montesini of his having found a vast concourse of Jews among the Cordilleras.

The word " assassin " is derived, according to Hyle, from *Hassa*, to kill. Some bring it from Hassan, the first chief of the association ; some from the Jewish Essene ; Lemoine from a word meaning " herbage ; " De Sacy and Von Hammer from " hashish " the opiate of hemp leaves, of which the assassins made a singular use.

The origin of the phrase " corporal oath " is to be found in the ancient usage of touching, upon occasion of attestation, the *corporale* or cloth which covered the consecrated articles.

Montgomery, in his lectures on *Literature* (!), has the following—" Who does not turn with absolute contempt from the signs, and gems, and filters, and caves, and genii of Eastern Tales as from the trinkets of a toy shop, and the trumpery of a raree show ? " What man of genius but must answer " Not I ? "

There is no particular air known throughout Switzerland by the name of the *Ranz des Vaches*. Every canton has its

own song, varying in words, notes, and even language. Mr. Cooper, the novelist, is our authority.

The Abbé de St. Pierre has fixed in his language two significant words—viz. *bienfaisance*, and the diminutive *la gloriole*.

"Incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim" is neither in Virgil nor Ovid, as often supposed, but in the "Alexandrics" of Philip Gualtier, a French poet of the thirteenth century.

The psalter of Solomon, which contains eighteen psalms, is a work which was found in Greek in the library of Augsburg, and has been translated into Latin by John Lewis de la Cerda. It is supposed not to be Solomon's, but the work of some Hellenistic Jew, and composed in imitation of David's psalms. The psalter was known to the ancients, and was formerly in the famous Alexandrian MS.

It is probable that the Queen of Sheba was Balkis, that Sheba was a kingdom in the southern part of Arabia Felix, and that the people were called Sabæans. These lines of Claudian relate to the people and queen :—

> "Medis, levibusque Sabæis
> Imperat hic sexus ; reginarumque sub armis
> Barbariæ pars magna jacet."

Sheridan declared he would rather be the author of the ballad called "Hosier's Ghost," by Glover, than of the Annals of Tacitus.

The word Jehovah is not Hebrew. The Hebrews had no such letters as J or V. The word is properly Jah, Uah, compounded of *Jah*, essence, and *Uah*, existing. Its full meaning is the self-existing essence of all things.

The "Song of Solomon," throwing aside the heading of

the chapters, which is the work of the English translators, contains nothing which relates to the Saviour or the church. It does not, like every other sacred book, contain even the name of the Deity.

The word translated "slanderers" in 1 Timothy iii. 2, and that translated "false accusers" in Titus ii. 3, are "*female devils*" in the original Greek of the New Testament.

The Hebrew language contains no word (except perhaps Jehovah) which conveys to the mind the idea of eternity. The translators of the Old Testament have used the word "eternity" but once (Isa. lvii. 15).

A version of the Psalms was published in 1642 by William Slatyer, of which this is a specimen :—

> "The righteous shall his sorrows scan,
> And laugh at him, and say, 'Behold!
> What hath become of this here man,
> That on his riches was so bold.'"

Milton, in "Paradise Lost," has this passage :—

> "When the *scourge*
> Inexorably, and the *torturing hour*
> Call us to penance;"

Gray, in his "Ode to Adversity," has :—

> "Thou tamer of the human breast,
> Whose iron *scourge* and *torturing hour*
> The bad affright."

Gray tells us that the image of his bard, where

> "Loose his beard, and hoary hair
> Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air,"

was taken from a picture by Raphael: yet the beard of Hudibras is also likened to a meteor :—

> "This hairy meteor did denounce
> The fall of sceptres and of crowns."

Dryden, in his "Absalom and Achitophel," has these lines:—

> "David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
> And heaven had wanted one immortal song;"

Pope, in his "Epistle to Arbuthnot, has:—

> "Friend of my life, which did not you prolong,
> The world had wanted many an idle song."

In Suidas is a letter from Dionysius, the Areopagite, dated Heliopolis in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad (the year of Christ's crucifixion), to his friend Apollophanes, in which is mentioned a total eclipse of the sun at noon. "Either," says Dionysius, "the author of nature suffers, or he sympathises with some who do."

A curious passage in a letter from Cicero to his literary friend Papirius Pætus, shows that our custom of annexing a farce or pantomime to a tragic drama existed among the Romans.

In Hudibras are these lines:—

> "Each window, like the pillory, appears
> With heads thrust through, nailed by the ears;"

Young, in his "Love of Fame," has the following:—

> "An opera, like a pillory, may be said
> To nail our ears down and expose our head."

Goldsmith's celebrated lines,

> "Man wants but little here below
> Nor wants that little long,"

are stolen from Young, who has

> "Man wants but little, nor that little long."

Archbishop Usher, in a manuscript of St. Patrick's Life, said to have been found at Louvain as an original of a very remote date, detected several entire passages purloined from his own writings.

"The Slipper of Cinderella," says the editor of the new edition of Wharton, "finds a parallel in the history of Rhodope." Cinderella is a tale of universal currency. An ancient Danish ballad has some of the incidents. It is popular amongst the Welsh—also among the Poles—in Hesse, and in Servia. Schottky found it among the Servian fables. Rollenbagen, in his *Froschmauseler*, speaks of it as the tale of the despised *Aschenpossel*. Luther mentions it. It is in the Italian Pentamerone under the title of Cenerentola.

Boileau is mistaken in saying that Petrarch, "*qui est regardé comme le père du sonnet*," borrowed it from the French or Provençal writers. The Italian sonnet can be traced back as far as the year 1200. Petrarch was not born until 1304.

Dante gives the name of *sonnet* to his little canzone or ode beginning

> "O voi che per la via d'Amor passate."

The lines

> "For he that fights and runs away
> May live to fight another day,
> But he that is in battle slain
> Will never rise to fight again."

are not to be found, as is thought, in Hudibras. Butler's verses ran thus:—

> "For he that flies may fight again,
> Which he can never do that's slain."

The former are in a volume of "Poems" by Sir John Mennes, reign of Charles the Second. The original idea is in Demosthenes. Ανηρ ὁ φευγων και παλιν μαχησεται.

The noble simile of Milton, of Satan with the rising sun, in the first book of the "Paradise Lost," had nearly occasioned the suppression of that epic; it was supposed to contain a treasonable allusion.

Campbell's line

"Like angel visits, few and far between,"

is a palpable plagiarism. Blair has

"Its visits,
Like angel visits, short and far between."

The character of the ancient Bacchus, that graceful divinity, seems to have been little understood by Dryden. The line in Virgil

"Et quocunque deus circum caput egit *honestum*"

is thus grossly mistranslated,

"On whate'er side he turns his *honest* face."

Macrobius gives the form of an imprecation by which the Romans believed whole towns could be demolished and armies defeated. It commences "Dis Pater sive Jovis mavis sive quo alio nomine fas est nominare," and ends, "Si hæc ita faxitis ut ego sciam, sentiam, intelligamque, tum quisquis votum hoc faxit recte factum esto, ovibus atris tribus, Tellus mater, teque, Jupiter, obtestor."

The *Courtier* of Baldazzar Castiglione, 1528, is the first attempt at periodical moral essay with which we are acquainted. The *Noctes Atticæ* of Aulus Gellius cannot be allowed to rank as such.

These lines were written over the closet-door of M. Menard :—

"Las d'espérer, et de me plaindre
De l'amour, des grands, et du sort
C'est ici que j'attends la mort
Sans la desirer ou la craindre."

Martin Luther, in his reply to Henry the Eighth's book, by which the latter acquired the title of "Defender of the Faith," calls the monarch very unceremoniously "a pig, an ass, a dunghill, the spawn of an adder, a basilisk, a lying buffoon dressed in a king's robes, a mad fool with a frothy mouth and a whorish face."

"An unshaped kind of something first appeared,"

is a line in Cowley's famous description of the Creation.

The "Turkish Spy" is the original of many similar works, among the best of which are Montesquieu's "Persian Letters," and the "British Spy" of our own Wirt. It was written undoubtedly by John Paul Marana, an Italian, *in* Italian, but probably was first published in French. Dr. Johnson, who only saw an English translation, supposed it an English work. Marana died in 1693.

Corneille's celebrated "Moi" of Medea is borrowed from Seneca. Racine, in "Phædra," has stolen nearly the whole scene of the declaration of love from the same puerile writer.

The peculiar zodiac of the comets is comprised in these verses of Cassini:—

> Antinous, Pegasusque, Andromeda, Taurus, Orion,
> Procyon, atque Hydrus, Centaurus, Scorpius, Arcus.

A religious hubbub, such as the world has seldom seen, was excited, during the reign of Frederick II., by the *imagined* virulence of a book entitled "The Three Impostors." It was attributed to Pierre des Vignes, chancellor of the king, who was accused by the Pope of having treated the religions of Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet as political fables. The work in question, however, which was squabbled about, abused, defended, and familiarly *quoted* by all parties, is well proved never to have existed.

Theophrastus, in his botanical works, anticipated the sexual system of Linnæus. Philolaus of Crotona maintained that comets appeared after a certain revolution—and Æcetes contended for the existence of what is now called the new world. Pulci, "The Sire of the Half Serious Rhyme," has a passage expressly alluding to a western continent. Dante, two centuries before, has the same allusion:—

" De vostri sensi ch'è del rimanente
Non vogliate negar l'esperenza,
Diretro al sol, del mondo sensa gente."

The "Lamentations" of Jeremiah are written, with the exception of the last chapter, in acrostic verse; that is to say, every line or couplet begins in alphabetical order, with some letter in the Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter each letter is repeated three times successively.

The fullest account of the Amazons is to be found in Diodorus Siculus.

Cicero makes *finis* masculine, Virgil feminine. *Usque ad eum finem*—Cicero. *Quæ finis standi? Hæc finis Priami fatorum*—Virgil.

Dante left a poem in three languages—Latin, Provençal and Italian. Rambaud de Vachieras left one in five.

Marcus Antoninus wrote a book entitled Των εις εαυτον—"Of the things which concern himself." It would be a good title for a diary.

The stream flowing through the middle of the valley of Jehoshaphat is called in the Gospel of St. John "the brook of cedars." In the Septuagint the word is κεδρον, darkness, from the Hebrew *kiddar*, black, and not κεδρων, of cedars.

Seneca says that Appion, a grammarian of the age of Caligula, maintained that Homer himself made the division of the Iliad and Odyssey into books, and evidences the first word of the Iliad, Μηνιν, the Μη of which signifies 48, the number of books in both poems. Seneca, however, adds "*Talia sciat oportet qui multa vult scire.*"

Hedelin, a Frenchman, in the beginning of the eight-

eenth century, denied that any such person as Homer ever existed, and supposed the Iliad to be made up *ex tragediis, et variis canticis de trivio mendicatorum et circulatorum—à la manière des chansons du Portneuf.*

There are about one thousand lines identical in the Iliad and Odyssey.

The shield of Achilles, in Homer, seems to have been copied from some *pharos* which the poet had seen in Egypt. What he describes on the central part of the shield is a map of the earth and of the celestial appearances.

Under a portrait of Tiberio Fiurelli who invented the character of Scaramouch, are these verses,—

> " Cet illustre Comedien
> De son art traça la carrière ;
> Il fut le maitre de Moliere,
> Et la Nature fut le sien."

In Cary's "Dante," the following passage :—

> " And pilgrim newly on his road with love,
> Thrills if he hear the vesper bell from far,
> That seems to mourn for the expiring day."

Gray has also

> " The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

Marmontel, in the "Encyclopédie" declares that the Italians did not possess a single comedy worth reading—therein displaying his ignorance. Some of the greatest names in Italian literature were writers of comedy. Baretti mentions a collection of four thousand dramas made by Apostolo Leno, of which the greater part were comedies, many of a high order.

A comedy or opera by Andreini was the origin of "Paradise Lost." Andreini's "Adamo" was the model of Milton's Adam.

Milton has the expression "Forget thyself to marble." Pope has the line "I have not yet forgot myself to stone."

The most particular history of the Deluge, and the nearest of any to the account given by Moses is to be found in Lucian (De Dea Syria).

The Greeks had no historian prior to Cadmus Milesius, nor any public inscription of which we can be certified before the laws of Draco.

So great is the uncertainty of ancient history that the epoch of Semiramis cannot be ascertained within 1535 years; for according to

Syncellus, she lived	before	Christ		2177
Patavius	„	„	„	2060
Helvicus	„	„	„	2248
Eusebius	„	„	„	1984
Mr. Jackson		„	„	1964
Archbishop Usher		„	„	1215
Philo Byblius, from Sanchoniathon				1200
Herodotus about		.	.	713

An extract from "The Mystery of St. Dennis" is in the "Bibliotheque du Theatre Français, depuis son origine," Dresde, 1768. In this serious drama, St. Dennis, having been tortured and at length decapitated, rises very quietly, takes his head under his arm, and walks off the stage in all the dignity of martyrdom.

The idea of "No light but rather darkness visible" was perhaps suggested to Milton by Spenser's

> "A little glooming light much like a shade."

Francis le Brossano engraved these verses upon a marble tomb which he erected to Petrarch at Argua.

> "Frigida Francisci tegit hic lapis ossa Petrarcæ.
> Suscipe, virgo parens, animam; sate virgine, parce,
> Fessaque jam terris, cœli requiescat in arce."

Bochart derives *Elysium* from the Phœnician Elysoth, joy, through the Greek Ἠλυσιον; *Circe* from the Phœnician Kirkar, to corrupt; *Siren* from the Phœnician Sir, to sing; *Scylla* from the Phœnician Scol, destruction; *Charybdis* from the Phœnician Chor-obdam, chasm of ruin.

Of the ten tragedies which are attributed to Seneca (the only Roman tragedies extant), nine are on Greek subjects.

Voltaire's ignorance of antiquity is laughable. In his Essay on Tragedy, prefixed to "Brutus," he actually boasts of having introduced the Roman senate on the stage in red mantles. "The Greeks," as he asserts, "*font paraître ses acteurs* (tragic) *sur des espèces d'échasses, le visage convert d'un masque qui exprime la douleur d'un côté et la joye de l'autre.*" The only circumstance upon which he could possibly have founded such an accusation is that in the *new comedy* masks were worn with one eyebrow drawn up and the other down, to denote a busybody or inquisitive meddler.

There is a book by a Jesuit, Père Labbe, entitled *La Bibliothèque des Bibliothèques;* it is a catalogue of all authors in all nations who have written catalogues of books.

Lucretius, lib. v. 93, 96, has the words,

"—— terras—
Una dies dabit exitio."

Ovid the lines,

"Carmine sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio terras cum dabit una dies."

It is a remarkable fact that during the whole period of the Middle Ages, the Germans lived in utter ignorance of the art of writing.

A version of the Psalms in 1564, by Archbishop Parker, has the following—

"Who sticketh to God in stable trust,
As Sion's mount he stands full just,
Which moveth no whit, nor yet can reel,
But standeth for ever as stiff as steel."

A part of the 137th Psalm runs thus:—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," which has been thus paraphrased in a version of the Psalms—

"If I forget thee ever,
Then let me prosper never,
But let it cause
My tongue and jaws
To cling and cleave together."

At the bottom of an obelisk which Pius VI. was erecting at great expense near the entrance of the Quirinal Palace in 1783, while the people were starving for bread, were found written these words,

"Signore dia questa pietra chi divenga pane."
"Lord, command that these stones be made bread."

SOME SECRETS OF THE MAGAZINE PRISON-HOUSE.

THE want of an International Copyright Law, by rendering it nearly impossible to obtain anything from the booksellers in the way of remuneration for literary labour, has had the effect of forcing many of our very best writers into the service of the Magazines and Reviews, which, with a pertinacity that does them credit, keep up in a certain or uncertain degree the good old saying that even in the thankless field of Letters the labourer is worthy of his hire. How—by dint of what dogged instinct of the honest and proper, these journals have contrived to persist in their paying practices, in the very teeth of the opposition got up by the Fosters and Leonard Scotts, who furnish for eight dollars any four of the British periodicals for a year, is a point we have had much difficulty in settling to our satisfaction, and we have been forced to settle it at last upon no more reasonable ground than that of a still lingering *esprit de patrie*. That Magazines can live, and not only live but thrive, and not only thrive but afford to disburse money for original contributions, are facts which can only be solved, under the circumstances, by the really fanciful but still agreeable supposition that there is somewhere still existing an ember not altogether quenched among the fires of good feeling for letters and literary men that once animated the American bosom.

It would *not do* (perhaps this is the idea) to let our poor-devil authors absolutely starve while we grow fat, in a literary sense, on the good things of which we unblushingly pick

the pocket of all Europe: it would not be exactly the thing *comme il faut* to permit a positive atrocity of this kind; and hence we have Magazines, and hence we have a portion of the public who subscribe to these Magazines (through sheer pity), and hence we have Magazine publishers (who sometimes take upon themselves the duplicate title of "editor *and* proprietor"),—publishers, we say, who, under certain conditions of good conduct, occasional puffs, and decent subserviency at all times, make it a point of conscience to encourage the poor-devil author with a dollar or two, more or less, as he behaves himself properly and abstains from the indecent habit of turning up his nose.

We hope, however, that we are not so prejudiced or so vindictive as to insinuate that what certainly does look like illiberality on the part of them (the Magazine publishers) is really an illiberality chargeable to *them*. In fact, it will be seen at once that what we have said has a tendency directly the reverse of any such accusation. These publishers pay *something*—other publishers nothing at all. Here certainly is a difference—although a mathematician might contend that the difference might be infinitesimally small. Still, these Magazine editors and proprietors *pay* (that is the word), and with your true poor-devil author the smallest favours are sure to be thankfully received. No: the illiberality lies at the door of the demagogue-ridden public, who suffer their anointed delegates (or perhaps arointed—which is it?) to insult the common sense of them (the public) by making orations in our national halls on the beauty and conveniency of robbing the Literary Europe on the highway, and on the gross absurdity in especial of admitting so unprincipled a principle that a man has any right and title either to his own brains or to the flimsy material that he chooses to spin out of them, like a confounded caterpillar as he is. If anything of this gossamer character stands in need of protection, why we have our hands full at once with the silk-worms and the *morus multicaulis*.

But if we cannot, under the circumstances, complain of the absolute illiberality of the Magazine publishers (since

pay they do), there is at least one particular in which we have against them good grounds of accusation. Why (since pay they must) do they not pay with a good grace and *promptly?* Were we in an ill-humour at this moment we could a tale unfold which would erect the hair on the head of Shylock. A young author, struggling with Despair itself in the shape of a ghastly poverty, which has no alleviation—no sympathy from an every-day world, that cannot understand his necessities, and that would pretend not to understand them if it comprehended them ever so well—this young author is politely requested to compose an article, for which he will "be handsomely paid." Enraptured, he neglects perhaps for a month the sole employment which affords him the chance of a livelihood, and having starved through the month (he and his family) completes at length the month of starvation and the article, and despatches the latter (with a broad hint about the former) to the pursy "editor" and bottle-nosed "proprietor" who has condescended to honour him (the poor devil) with his patronage. A month (starving still), and no reply. Another month—still none. Two months more—still none. A second letter, modestly hinting that the article may not have reached its destination—still no reply. At the expiration of six additional months, personal application is made at the "editor and proprietor's" office. Call again. The poor devil goes out, and does not fail to call again. Still call again;—and call again is the word for three or four months more. His patience exhausted, the article is demanded. No—he can't have it—(the truth is, it was too good to be given up so easily)—"it is in print," and "contributions of this character are never paid for (it is a *rule* we have) under six months after publication. Call in six months after the issue of your affair, and your money is ready for you—for we are business men ourselves—prompt." With this the poor devil is satisfied, and makes up his mind that the "editor and proprietor" is a gentleman, and that of course he (the poor devil) will wait as requested. And it is supposable that he would have waited if he could—but Death in the meantime would not. He dies, and by

the good luck of his decease (which came by starvation) the fat "editor and proprietor" is fatter henceforward and for ever to the amount of five and twenty dollars, very cleverly saved, to be spent generously in canvas-backs and champagne.

There are two things which we hope the reader will not do as he runs over this article: first, we hope that he will not believe that we write from any personal experience of our own, for we have only the reports of actual sufferers to depend upon; and second, that he will not make any personal application of our remarks to any Magazine publisher now living, it being well known that they are all as remarkable for their generosity and urbanity, as for their intelligence and appreciation of Genius.

ANASTATIC PRINTING.

It is admitted by every one that of late there has been a rather singular invention, called Anastatic Printing, and that this invention may possibly lead, in the course of time, to some rather remarkable results—among which the one chiefly insisted upon is the abolition of the ordinary stereotyping process—but this seems to be the amount, in America at least, of distinct understanding on this subject.

"There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, "without some strangeness in the proportions." The philosopher had reference, here, to beauty in its common acceptation—but the remark is equally applicable to all the forms of beauty—that is to say, to everything which arouses profound interest in the heart or intellect of man. In every such thing, strangeness—in other words *novelty*—will be found a principal element: and so universal is this law that it has no exception even in the case of this principal element itself. Nothing unless it be novel—*not even novelty itself*—will be the source of very intense excitement among men. Thus the *ennuyé* who travels in the hope of dissipating his *ennui* by the perpetual succession of novelties, will invariably be disappointed in the end. He receives the impression of novelty so continuously that it is at length no novelty to receive it. And the man, in general, of the nineteenth century—more especially of our own particular epoch of it—is very much in the predicament of the traveller in question. We are so habituated to new inventions that we no longer get from newness the vivid interest which should appertain to the new—and no example could be adduced more distinctly showing that the *mere* importance of a novelty will not suffice to gain for it universal attention

than we find in the invention of *Anastatic Printing.* It excites not one fiftieth part of the comment which was excited by the comparatively frivolous invention of Sennefelder;—but he lived in the good old days when a novelty was novel. Nevertheless, while Lithography opened the way for a very agreeable pastime, it is the province of Anastatic Printing to revolutionise the world.

By means of this discovery anything written, drawn, or printed, can be made to stereotype itself, with absolute accuracy, in five minutes.

Let us take, for example, a page of this Journal; supposing only one side of the leaf to have printing on it. We damp the leaf with a certain acid diluted, and then place it between two leaves of blotting-paper to absorb superfluous moisture. We then place the printed side in contact with a zinc plate that lies on the table. The acid in the interspaces between the letters immediately corrodes the zinc, but the acid on the letters themselves has no such effect, having been neutralised by the ink. Removing the leaf at the end of five minutes, we find a reversed copy, in slight relief, of the printing on the page—in other words, we have a stereotype plate, from which we can print a vast number of absolute facsimiles of the original printed page—which latter has not been at all injured in the process—that is to say, we can still produce from it (or from any impression of the stereotype plate) new stereotype plates *ad libitum.* Any engraving, or any pen-and-ink drawing, or any MS. can be stereotyped in precisely the same manner.

The *facts* of this invention are established. The process is in successful operation both in London and Paris. We have seen several specimens of printing done from the plates described, and have now lying before us a leaf (from the London Art-Union) covered with drawing, MS., letterpress, and impressions from woodcuts—the whole printed from the Anastatic stereotypes, and warranted by the Art-Union to be absolute *facsimiles* of the originals.

The process can scarcely be regarded as a *new* invention—and appears to be rather the modification and successful application of two or three previously ascertained principles

—those of etching, electrography, lithography, etc. It follows from this that there will be much difficulty in establishing or maintaining a right of patent, and the probability is that the benefits of the process will soon be thrown open to the world. As to the secret—it can only be a secret in name.

That the discovery (if we may so call it) has been made, can excite no surprise in any thinking person—the only matter for surprise is that it has not been made many years ago. The obviousness of the process, however, in no degree lessens its importance. Indeed its inevitable results enkindle the imagination, and embarrass the understanding.

Every one will perceive at once that the ordinary process of stereotyping will be abolished. Through this ordinary process a publisher, to be sure, is enabled to keep on hand the means of producing edition after edition of any work the certainty of whose sale will justify the cost of stereotyping—which is trifling *in comparison* with that of re-setting the matter. But still, *positively*, this cost (of stereotyping) is great. Moreover, there cannot always be certainty about sales. Publishers frequently are forced to re-set works which they have neglected to stereotype, thinking them unworthy the expense; and many excellent works are not published at all, because small editions do not pay, and the anticipated sales will not warrant the cost of stereotype. *Some* of these difficulties will be at once remedied by the Anastatic Printing, and *all* will be remedied in a brief time. A publisher has only to print as many copies as are immediately demanded. He need print no more than a dozen, indeed, unless he feels perfectly confident of success. Preserving *one* copy, he can from this, at no other cost than that of the zinc, produce with any desirable rapidity, as many impressions as he may think proper Some idea of the advantages thus accruing may be gleaned from the fact that in several of the London publishing warehouses there is deposited in stereotype plates alone property to the amount of a million sterling.

The next view of the case, in point of obviousness, is, that if necessary, a hundred thousand impressions per hour, or even infinitely more, can be taken of any newspaper, or

similar publication. As many presses can be put in operation as the occasion may require—indeed there can be no limit to the number of copies producible, provided we have no limit to the number of presses.

The tendency of all this to cheapen information, to diffuse knowledge and amusement, and to bring before the public the very class of works which are most valuable, but least in circulation on account of unsaleability—is what need scarcely be suggested to any one. But benefits such as these are merely the immediate and most obvious—by no means the most important.

For some years, perhaps, the strong spirit of conventionality—of conservation—will induce authors in general to have recourse, as usual, to the setting of type. A printed book *now* is more sightly, and more legible than any MS., and for some years the idea will not be overthrown that this state of things is one of necessity. But by degrees it will be remembered that, while MS. was a *necessity*, men wrote after such fashion that no books printed in modern times have surpassed their MSS. either in accuracy or in beauty. This consideration will lead to the cultivation of a neat and distinct style of handwriting—for authors will perceive the immense advantage of giving their own MSS. directly to the public without the expensive interference of the type-setter, and the often ruinous intervention of the publisher. All that a man of letters need do, will be to pay some attention to legibility of MS., arrange his pages to suit himself, and stereotype them instantaneously, as arranged. He may intersperse them with his own drawings, or with anything to please his own fancy, in the certainty of being fairly brought before his readers with all the freshness of his original conception about him.

And at this point we are arrested by a consideration of infinite moment, although of a seemingly shadowy character. The cultivation of accuracy in MS. thus enforced will tend, with an inevitable impetus, to every species of improvement in style, more especially in the points of concision and distinctness; and this again, in a degree even more noticeable, to precision of thought and luminous arrangement of matter.

There is a very peculiar and easily intelligible reciprocal influence between the thing written and the manner of writing, but the latter has the predominant influence of the two. The more remote effect on philosophy at large, which will inevitably result from improvement of style and thought in the points of concision, distinctness, and accuracy, need only be suggested to be conceived.

As a consequence of attention being directed to neatness and beauty of MS., the antique profession of the scribe will be revived, affording abundant employment to women, their delicacy of organisation fitting them peculiarly for such tasks. The female amanuensis indeed will occupy very nearly the position of the present male type-setter, whose industry will be diverted perforce into other channels.

These considerations are of vital importance, but there is yet one beyond them all. The value of every book is a compound of its literary value and its physical or mechanical value, as the product of physical labour applied to the physical material. But at present the latter value immensely predominates even in the works of the most esteemed authors. It will be seen, however, that the new condition of things will at once give the ascendency to the literary values, and thus, by their literary values, will books come to be estimated among men. The wealthy gentleman of "elegant leisure" will lose the vantage-ground now afforded him, and will be forced to tilt on terms of equality with the poor-devil author. At present the literary world is a species of anomalous congress, in which the majority of the members are constrained to listen in silence while all the eloquence proceeds from a privileged few. In the new *régime* the humblest will speak as often and as freely as the most exalted, and will be sure of receiving just that amount of attention which the intrinsic merit of their speeches may deserve.

From what we have said it will be evident that the discovery of Anastatic Printing will not only not obviate the necessity of copyright laws, and of an international law in especial, but will render this necessity more imperative and more apparent. It has been shown that in depressing

the value of the *physique* of a book the invention will proportionally elevate the value of its *morale*, and since it is the latter value alone which the copyright laws are needed to protect, the necessity of the protection will be only the more urgent and more obvious than ever.

END OF VOL. III

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